

THE
WAR SONGS
OF THE
PRINCE OF
PEACE

R.M.BENSON

VOL. I
HELPS FOR
USING THE
PSALTER

LONDON
WILLIAM MURRAY

THE WAR SONGS
OF THE
PRINCE OF PEACE



THE WAR-SONGS OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE

A DEVOTIONAL COMMENTARY
ON THE PSALTER

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VOL. I

HELPS FOR USING THE PSALTER

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PREFACE

THE purpose of the present Commentary is to help all readers to use the Psalter in its true sense as having been given to us by God to be the proper instrument of all true devotion. In order thus to use it there should be as accurate a knowledge of the literal meaning as is attainable. We are not indeed to limit our value of the Psalter by our own power of understanding it. We have to use it as a God-given formulary, far surpassing what we can understand. But we ought to try to raise our understanding to the fulness of its meaning. Our use of the Psalter in its fullest Divine meaning will best serve to enable us to use it, as far as may be, for our own personal interests and our immediate difficulties.

Various circumstances make it often impossible to transfer a poem with all those sentiments which constitute its very substance, from one language to another. This impossibility is not limited to those cases where some difficulty of phrase, or possibly some corruptness of the text, makes even the learned reader doubtful as to the meaning of the words. Sentiments require to be measured and recognized according to the surrounding circumstances which elicit them. Utterances have to be

interpreted according to the educational position of the speaker, and languages express the educational result of different civilizations.

We are not then to think that a translation is to be set aside and superseded by another, because of certain faults, however manifest. It does not always follow that the more accurate rendering will be the truest practical transference of the original thought, and yet it cannot but be of great importance with a view to elucidating earlier renderings, even when those renderings have a practical fitness in various ways greater than the new translation can claim.

It is only by fresh rendering that the force of the original can be increasingly appreciated. A translation is the most important part of a Commentary.

The following translation has been attempted not so as in any way to supersede what must be to every devout Englishman the ordinary form of Psalter, that, namely, which we have in the Prayer-Book Version, but for the purpose of elucidating it.

It seems necessary that such a help should have a metrical form, if it is to be helpful to worshippers in general. The various renderings which exist in mere prose form, however good, fail of catching the ear of the ordinary reader, although sometimes they have a charm of special beauty when written by devout students. Familiar with the rhythmical perfection of our Prayer-Book Version, the reader feels that any translation of the same character is cold, inasmuch as it challenges comparison with that which has possession of the heart: it fails to act beyond the intellect.

A translation, therefore, ought to be in verse as much as possible representing the lines of the original.

The Hebrew system is too different from ours to allow of the Psalms being adequately versified under the form of modern hymns. Some very beautiful stanzas have been added to our Hymnology by translations from the Psalms, but one feels that another genius has been substituted for that of the original Psalmist. The whole Psalm is a new thing, not in any sense a reproduction of the original. A translation should endeavour to reproduce the original, however inferior it may itself be to that which has to be reproduced.

It will be seen at once that there is no attempt in the present work to transform the Psalms into congregational hymns. The endeavour has been to represent the lines and strophes of the original as accurately as possible. Generally speaking, the lines are rhymed, for the English ear demands it, and, indeed, the Hebrew, although not possessing what we know as rhyme, is so full of assonances which help the ear in a manner similar to that of rhyme, that without the recurrence of identical sounds, the whole power of the expression is lost.

Where there are several lines to one verse, the rhyme will be generally the same for all.

Sometimes a verse has only one line. Then there will be no line in English to rhyme with the first.

With reference to Pss. 37. and 119., the gnomic character of each verse seemed to make it impossible to put them into English couplets without destroying their vigour.

It is, of course, impossible always to render a word by the same English word wherever it occurs. That, how-

ever, has been attempted with reference to many words in this translation, where the meaning was identical. It was felt that identity of verbal rendering was a gain of so much importance in many instances, where perhaps one would not have anticipated it, that the harshness necessitated by such identical rendering was more than compensated.

Especial care has been taken with reference to the names of God.

Jehovah is invariably rendered by the English equivalent, "Lord."

Elohim always by "God."

El by "Godhead."

Adonai by "Master," which seemed to be the most available word, since "Lord" is already bespoken, and the device of typographical distinction used in the Authorized Version is not sufficient.

JAH is retained. It is spelt with a Y in the word "Halleluyah."

Eloah is "Deity," or else it is retained.

Elyon is "Most High."

Shaddai: once "Almighty," once retained.

Sabaoth: hosts.

Great care has been taken that the translation shall be as literal as possible. Nothing has been permitted to mingle with it which would introduce any new idea, and poetical prettinesses of a modern type which might sometimes have filled up or softened a Hebrew phrase have been rejected.

A brief devotional introduction is prefixed to each Psalm in order to help towards its use as an exercise of

the individual heart. A few marginal notes are also added to make the purpose of each strophe more easily apprehended.

The analysis of the Psalter is to show the bearing of the individual Psalms in their connection one with another, and this is more fully worked out in the Prefatory notes of the introductory volume.

The fuller development of the teaching of the Psalter with references to the Christian faith is the object of the Messianic Commentary which follows.

There are also some brief essays upon various classes of the Psalms, and upon the method of structure which may be thought to underlie the consecutive order by which they are numbered. There seems to be a series of trilogies, and sometimes of larger combinations, which, although not notified by the Book itself, explains the sequence of thought. For want of this being recognized, the arrangement often seems to be fortuitous and infelicitous.

In every Psalm the speaker is supposed to identify himself with Messiah, that is, with our Lord Jesus Christ, the Great Mediator, for our words cannot rise with acceptance before God, except through Him. Of this, however, more will be said in another place.

Historical considerations will not be ignored, but they will be treated as subordinate to the contemplation of what is the Mind of the Spirit, as giving life to each Psalm from the Person of Christ, the Head of the Body. Such historical occasions are of great value in giving force to the mystical meaning of a Psalm, because the event was sometimes a type of the Divine mystery

which the Psalm enshrines, and sometimes also a worldly contrast to the heavenly reality which the Psalmist would unfold.

Great care, however, has been taken that the mystical interpretation shall always be gathered out of the Hebrew text, and not imported into it. No mystical meaning has been noticed, because some early father or other devotional writer has illustrated a Christian sentiment by a beautiful application of words. Such poetical illustration may be only accidental, and then the application of the words disturbs rather than adorns the legitimate intelligence of the expression. Each Psalm is always considered in its completeness. The separate verses are not investigated save as bearing upon the general meaning of the context.

One cannot study the Psalter, nor indeed any portion of Holy Scripture, without feeling more and more the intense vitality of Divine inspiration which breathes through every part. The superintending, Divine, editorship of the whole (if such a phrase may be allowed) is more marvellous than the separate inspiration of each individual sentence. If the suggestions of this Book are found to be helpful, may we all learn to live and speak in prayer and praise with increasing consciousness of our debt to Almighty God, in that He calls us thus near to Himself in the fellowship of His Incarnate Word.

The words with which we approach God in Matins and Evensong, and on many other occasions, are not words of human invention, but have been given to us by God Himself. They were used by our Blessed Lord when He was Himself taking part in the Temple services.

We know also that they formulated His own private devotions. So was it in His very last utterance upon the Cross. No words of human hymns can rise up to the same importance. We ought to see that we offer them to God with all the outward perfection of sacred song, and all the inward perfection of intelligent love which belongs to a worship in which the Spirit of Christ is still pouring itself forth from the lips of His Body, the Church.

By the sacraments we are made members of that Body. In using the Psalter we are exercising the living fellowship with God which belongs to those whom Christ has taken into union with Himself, that in us He may speak continually to the Father by the power of the Eternal Spirit. Our intercessions for various objects we have to arrange according to the outward accidents of our natural position, but our right to make such intercessions depends upon our acceptance of the Mind of Christ as the mode in which we are to approach God. We give utterance to that Mind, while we sing the Psalter.

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I

ON THE USE OF THE PSALTER

WHO does not feel the power of the Psalms! But at the same time who is there who has any real consciousness of what is the secret of that power?

Compare the Psalms with the sacred poems of any religion in the world extraneous to the Religion of Christ, and they stand out in solitary dignity. Now and then some one who seeks to minimize the Divine supremacy of the Psalter may point out phrases which seem to be watchwords of religious thought common to the Psalms and to other poems of religious sentiment. Others may do the same with the intention of showing how much sublimity is to be found in the human aspirations of devout men outside of the spiritual influence of Christ. The very endeavour to make the most of certain points of resemblance only serves, after all, to show the greatness of the gulf which separates the Psalter from all else.

Where we find the singers of other songs addressing God in words that are close akin to those of David, we nevertheless feel that the imagery of the Pantheistic philosopher, however sublime, is quite different in its character from that of the Psalter. It is like a plucked flower. It is separate from any stem which can

maintain its life. The same words which elsewhere suffice only for a fragmentary aspiration, are found in the Psalter as the true blossom of the plant which they adorn. They belong to the very structure of the ode in which they occur. They are there as imperishable blossoms of the Tree of Life. What in one case is but as a plucked flower laid upon the coffin of the dead, telling only of the perishing character of the speaker who lays it there as a symbol of his affection, possesses in the other case not only a life, but a life-giving power, so that we feel ourselves lifted up above the sphere of mortality by words whose Divine inspiration comes from the Tree of Life without losing its fragrance. The love of God, the wisdom of God, the predestination of man, the joy of redemption, the glory of sanctification, the inspired aspirations of Divine worship, claim our individual recognition while we use these formularies. They never disappoint the worshipper if he use the Psalter with reverent intelligence and growing experience of love. As they are inspired, so they are inspiring, or at any rate they train the devout soul which utters them to experience the sweet transporting inspiration of the Divine Life which belongs to him in Christ. The more we meditate upon them in this consciousness of immortality, the more we feel their power. It is not the sublimity of the suggestion, the beauty of the image, or the fascination of a poetical or philosophical conceit which strikes our mind for a moment, soon to pass away. It is the virtue of an eternal life which transports our mind into a region of higher thought than our own, the fellowship of a higher Thinker, the consciousness of union with One who in the use of symbols gathered from a finite Universe, fills them with substantial reality of infinite contemplation. This power uplifts our hearts and minds from the

superficial phenomena of created experiences to the life-giving relationships of Creative Truth and Love. The beauties of the Psalter cannot be picked out as the gems selected from ordinary poems. They have their beauty, as they have their life, in union with the context where they are found. That context may have no sparkling brilliancy, but the whole Psalm is filled with the sensitive tenderness of a life which makes all its parts essential to the complete perfection. In the human form, the arm has not the lustre of the eye, but the eye shines with a vitality which is not in itself. It belongs to the living organism. The intelligence which beams from the eye is but a manifestation of the same inherent energy which gives strength to the muscles of the arm. So is it that the various parts of a Psalm in its depression and its exaltation, in its plain utterance of daily need and its transcendental raptures of Divine Love, constitute a mysterious whole whose material diversity testifies to the manifoldness of man's nature, while yet every particle of it is living with the undivided glory of a Divine Sonship.

This is why all those attempts are so unsuccessful which are sometimes made, to arrange in fresh combinations parts of Psalms which are thought to be cognate, separating these selections from the other parts which seem to jar upon the idea of joy or sorrow which is dominant in our minds for the moment. The result of cutting out what does not suit, and substituting other verses which meet our own immediate state of sentiment, is only like the Oriental multiplication of heads or arms to symbolize supernatural capacities by grotesque conjunctions. The gods of the heathen are but idols, and their sacred songs have no living power. It is the Lord who made the heavens. It is the Lord who inspired the words of the Psalter.

He who gave us the Psalter knew well what we were to whom He gave it. He in His secret wisdom fashioned all our parts, and consequently He knows well what human nature requires. He knows us in that unity of being which binds all the human race in one. By reason of that unity, what suits one, suits all. To our external inspection it seems as if one man were very different from another. The Mind of God knows the opposite of this to be the truth. He sees the absolute identity of human nature under every possible variation of outward circumstance. Verses written merely with the poetic inspiration of natural genius may suit various individualities, nationalities or epochs, but the vital inspiration under whose power the Psalter was composed, speaks to all ears and stirs all hearts. It thrills through the whole nature of man at all times. The voice of the Creator issues from the abysses of the heart, and recalls us from the short-lived accidents of worldly distraction to the abiding law of our fellowship with the unseen.

In the Psalter God stirs our hearts more effectively by teaching us how to speak to Himself than could be done by any words merely adapted by Himself to us. The Divine Mediator is Man as well as God, and He makes us experience the truth of our having been created in God's image by directing the aspirations of our nature to Him whose image we bear. The Psalter, as developing the Mind of God in colloquy with man, shows its own Divine character and rouses us to the hopes which our participation of the Divine image necessitates.

God who gave us the Psalter knows what we are by reason of that nature which He gave us. He knows also what we have become by reason of our sins which have marred that nature.

Man tries to set his nature to rights by external

treatment which may cut off something that offends, and encourage the growth of what is deficient. A living frame cannot be shaped into perfection by any surgery of this kind. God, as He knows the diseases generated within us by the Fall, supplies us in the Psalter with that medicine which the human heart requires in order to recover its healthy action. The Psalter is the expression of the heart of the True Man, and if we would escape from the faulty idiosyncrasies of our own individual condition, we can only do so by recurring to the controlling inspiration of the true, universal manhood. We cannot improve ourselves by factitious appliances. Whatever our failing may be, our only possibility of improvement is in recurring to the original type of the nature which God gave us. That original type is given to us vitalized with eternal glory by the Mind of the true Son of Man speaking with God in the Psalter; and it is in the vital power of union with Him that we must learn to say our Psalms aright.

So then, in saying the Psalter, we are drawn inward to experience the healthy operation of a true humanity. We become what we ought to be, not by reaching out after external supports, but by the simplicity of child-like identification with the primary law under which God created us. We are not our own. We are the work of God's Hands, and if we would get rid of our faults, we must return to be what He made us to be at the beginning.

Herein then lies the power of the Psalter. It suits every man because it is the utterance of true manhood. It expresses the true desires of a true manhood. It expresses the needs of a manhood which is suffering through the Fall. It makes us feel the glory of our original estate, and the misery of our present condition. It makes us feel that we can only escape from the

necessary for the self-surrender of faith, that we may reach out and grasp the hand of our Deliverer. He is the true Man, the Incarnate Son of God, who calls us from our own misery to share His life.

We must, then, be careful not to dwarf the Psalms to our own personal and changeful moods. We must recognise them as being the utterance of the Incarnate Son of God, the only True Man, who bears indeed the sense of our infirmities, and experiences all the consequences of our sins, but calls us to die to the world in the fellowship of His grace, that in Him we may find the earnest of His Spirit speaking in our hearts, and so we may attain to the redemption of our bodies also in the fulness of His heavenly glory.

Thus only can the Psalms have their Truth. Thus only have they real Life. Incidental expressions in every Psalm constantly make us feel as if the Psalm were written for ourselves. So unchangeable is the nature of man under all circumstances, and so true is the Psalter as the expression of that nature! But at the same time we can scarcely find a Psalm which does not in some way go beyond what suits our individuality. There are words to which our hearts feel that they cannot give a meaning, in the natural sphere of our being. Claims of holiness and profound self-abasement for sin are strangely alternated. We cannot select from a Psalm as much as meets our wants and let the rest go. We must take each Psalm as a whole, and the Psalter as a whole. Before we can say it at all, we must lose ourselves in Christ. The words are His, not ours.

So must we say, or rather sing, the Psalms. How much the Psalms lose because of the dull formality with which we repeat them! If we would feel their sacramental power, we ought to be singing them with all the choirs of heaven. Hymns of merely human authorship

may well be read, but Psalms should be sung, unless there be some great impossibility. Our whole nature, body and soul, should take part with the ascended Saviour whose Mind is given to us in the Psalter, that we may praise God in the exercise of that union with Him, which is effected by our regeneration. He feeds our bodies with His own most blessed Body, and the very object of His doing so is, that we may hold a higher communion with Him, and praise the Father by singing the Psalms which He has taught us. "Is any merry? Let him sing Psalms" (James v. 13).

Even before He came in the flesh, the choirs of the Temple sang those Psalms, and when He was upon the earth He joined in singing them. There is no exercise of devotion to compare with this. The virtues of the Divine Life which we receive in the Sacraments, find herein their true expression.

The daily Psalms ought for us to have a very different meaning from what they had for Jews before Christ came. They are no mere forms inherited from the times before Christ. They were then as the wood laid upon the altar, but waiting for the fire to descend from heaven. Now Christ has touched them and kindled them with a heavenly flame, and we are sadly profaning His great gift if we do not use it with the utmost jubilation of faith. The words are transformed from earthly weakness to heavenly substance, for the Mind of the Incarnate Word fills them. As Circumcision is transformed into regenerating Baptism, and Jewish Sacrifices to Eucharistic Communion, so the Psalms of Davidic hope are transformed into the glowing utterances of Messianic perfection. As our bodies and souls are nourished and cleansed by the Body and Blood of Christ, so are our minds lifted up into heavenly Truth by union with the Mind of Christ in saying the Psalter.

Whether we say the Psalms publicly or privately, we must lose ourselves in Christ. In order to this, we must be careful to cherish the consciousness of the supernatural life of Christ which the recitation of the Psalter ought to develop within us. The early Church felt the power of Divine Psalmody, their union with Christ and with the choirs of heaven, while they sang their Psalms. Probably the Psalms which Paul and Silas sang in the prison were an Office substantially the same as our Matins and Evensong. What would any congregation of early Christians say, if they came into a modern Church and witnessed the dull formality with which the Psalter is repeated! So little consciousness of God being glorified or man's spiritual nature drinking in any inspiration from the recital!

We must see that we use the Psalter as no mere venerable tradition of ages which have passed away, but in the living fellowship of heavenly joy, whereby the children of grace ought to feel their union with the Incarnate Word as the Head of the Body, while they praise God in the fulness of Truth.

We are not to plead inability to use the Psalms because there may be many phrases which we do not understand. Doubtless the words often point to mysteries of faith which we can but feebly apprehend, and higher mysteries too than have even yet been revealed to our faith. We must "pray with the Spirit," even if we cannot pray "with the understanding." Though the understanding may be unable to give accurate explanation of the words, yet the heart, united with the Heart of Jesus, will not be unfruitful in the outpouring of Divine Love. Human words are unmeaning if they go beyond human experience, but words which enshrine the Mind of Christ are none the less true by reason of our ignorance. Even though we have some mistaken

idea of their meaning, the mistake is ours, but the words mean what He means. Their very obscurity sometimes helps us to remember the sacredness of communion beyond the veil in which we are associated with One who is infinitely greater than ourselves. Even in those expressions which to us may seem quite clear, we must remember that the words connote higher thoughts, which are far above our natural intention. The simplest words as coming forth from the Mind of Christ, spread out into vast issues of Divine glory which our short-sighted apprehension can never anticipate. The meaning of the Psalter will thus shine out before us more and more. Difficulties will be cleared and distant prospects will open out to our view under the illuminating Spirit of God, if we are careful to remember that the Psalms do not gain their reality from our use of them, but our devotion gains Divine reality from using them. Even in the natural order of human society, the intelligence becomes unconsciously developed and purified by intercourse with minds of greater capacity than our own. It is in perfect conformity with this law, although intensified by the inspiration of a supernatural power, that we must look to have our spiritual understanding elevated to a growing perception of what God's Word means, by using, in fellowship with Himself as the principal Speaker, the words which Christ the Incarnate God has entrusted to our devotion. Our lips must utter and our hearts must love. Our minds must grow to Divine knowledge by such exercise, and our spirits must glow with the Breath of Him whose mouthpiece we are.

II

ON THE MESSIANIC INTERPRETATION
OF THE PSALTER

WE have seen that the Psalter is the utterance of the True Man, and the only True Man is Christ. Consequently the whole Psalter is to be said in union with Christ if we would use it in its truth.

It does not seem to be possible to assign any halting-place between this acceptance of the Book in a supernatural character and the simple conception of the Psalms as historical lays, capable indeed of being applied in illustration of Divine Truth, but bearing all the traces of human fault.

How unspeakably great is the difference between the two ideas!

If we rest content with the lower hypothesis, can we join in many of the utterances without putting some force upon ourselves? Must we not feel that we are going back from the lofty privileges of the Christian covenant to join in words which have indeed for us no meaning, in as much as all the circumstances eliciting them have passed away, and although the writers were men of whom the world was not worthy, nevertheless they had not been raised to the same gifts of spiritual illumination in which we ought to be living? We feel surprised that they should be treasured in the Word

of God. So we come to choose what expressions we like, and use portions of them as may suit our fancy. This is indeed probably the tone of mind with which, alas! many persons say the Psalms.

It could not be the intention of God to put a collection of hymns into our hands to be used in such a way. The Jews of old would not have sanctioned this idea. We cannot conceive of our Lord joining in the Temple Services and accepting them as the expression of His own worship of the Father, if this had been the case. It cannot be that Saints throughout so many ages would have joined in handing on the recitation of the Psalter as a high religious duty and privilege, if this had been all.

On the other hand, if we recognise Christ as the true Psalmist, we see why the collection should well be called the Psalms of David, "the Beloved." The alabaster box of historic form is broken, and the unction of the Holy Name fills the whole Church with its fragrance. The abstract and earthly idea of deliverance from enemies is transformed into the Personal consciousness of the triumphant Redeemer. Psalm after Psalm sings of salvation, and the word "Salvation," identical in Hebrew with the name of "Jesus," wakens in our hearts the grateful acknowledgement of Him, "who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven," taking upon Himself the likeness of our sinful flesh that He might raise us up in Himself to the holiness of God.

The Psalms become to us real means of entering into His purpose, and appropriating His gifts of grace, because they set Him before us as One who is mysteriously identified with sinners, although separate from them.

If it seems to us difficult to suppose that certain expressions of the Psalmist could be accepted by Him

in His devotion, we have to remember that this is no mere matter of exegesis. It is an historical fact that He took part in the services of the Temple, and therefore He did use those words as His very own.

Surely those words must be sweet to us which come from His lips. The faithful soul values the Psalter more for this reason than for any archaic interest or individual suitability. Jesus used these words as He joined in the worship of God's House, and we should feel ourselves to have lost the greatest treasure of life if the fragrance of His Name did not pervade them, and the sweetness of His voice fill every word with holy power. Words of inexhaustible delight! In using them we feel ourselves to be approaching God with all the acceptable dignity of His Mediatorial Headship.

He is the One True Man. The Psalter finds its truth in His Person. These words formulated the worship in which He joined when He was upon the earth, and the eternal virtue of His grace rings out in every syllable of them, so that we, in using them, join with Him now that He is exalted in heaven.

1. He is the Son of God.
2. He is the True Man.
3. He is the Head of the Church.

Various expressions belong to Him in these three characters, and, if we would join with Him, we ought to consider what is the special aspect under which the particular Psalm brings Him before us.

He never lays aside His Personal character as the Son of God. It is true that He does not anywhere address the Father with the avowal of His Divine Sonship. That avowal could not be made until He had become personally Incarnate. It were not fitting that those who were types of Himself should anticipate so

stupendous a truth. Any accommodated use of what expressed a substantive reality would have been a falsehood disparaging the eternal truth of the reality itself. Moreover, it is not as the Son of God that He needed the Psalter. The Psalter is the expression of needs contingent upon His created life, and His relationship to God as the Elect Servant. The Sonship therefore remains as a glorious relationship to be hereafter manifested when His Manhood should be glorified with the Father as His Eternal Son before the beginning of creation. Nevertheless, His Personal Sonship is implied throughout as the basis of acceptance by which His representatives claim to be heard. So, in the very outset, this is the Decree which He has to promulgate. "Thou art My Son: this day have I begotten Thee." The Third Book closes with a Trilogy of the Divine Birth. All nations are to claim new birth in Zion, because Zion's King will be heard making the great avowal which the Father accepts: "Thou art my Father, my God, and my strong salvation." God says: "I will make Him my first-born, higher than the Kings of the earth."

The Divine Sonship, therefore, underlies the claim of the Elect Servant. To this did David look forward with faith. This we must recognise by faith as having been communicated to ourselves. "Give the King Thy judgements, O Lord, and Thy righteousness unto the King's Son." As Our Lord said before His ascension: "I go to My Father, and your Father," so now must we join with Him in speaking as true children, "partakers of the Divine Nature," to God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But it is the consciousness of the Manhood which the Psalms specially exhibit,—the Mind of Christ. His human Mind and Heart and Will are ever conformable to the predestination of the Eternal Godhead wherein He

participates with the Father by an undivided act of consubstantial Sonship. His Human Will operates under the necessities of external circumstance. It is not lost in the predestinating sovereignty of the Divine Will. It regards all created events with the truth of a created fellowship. It chooses according to the Wisdom which befits His earthly position. It does not treat the world around with the unreal sublimity of an insensible indifference. Created life is a reality to Him because He has a created nature, and therefore He does not eliminate Himself from its future expectations, so as to abide in a blank eternity. His will is to be the instrument of the moral development of that creation to which, as the Word of God, He gave being at the first. "I am Prayer." His whole existence is an existence of dependent Love. In every created object of regard He beholds the necessity of Divine support. He does not merely leave it mechanically to accomplish a Divine purpose. His human desires penetrate through the secrets of creation, so as to call forth those principles which creation enshrines. He seeks, He desires, nothing beyond what the Divine power has provided, but His human will operates coextensively with the provisions of Divine power to accomplish all that the Father has predetermined. His will is, therefore, the continual energy of His mediatorial character, bringing forth from the treasury of the Divine goodness all that will make His creatures in their various degrees glorify God most perfectly.

Such is its action, but it is always subject to the Eternal Will by reason of the Personal Sonship. It has its origin in created knowledge, but its rest in Divine predestination. "Father, not My will but Thine be done." "I come to do Thy will, O my God." Such are His words at the close of the First Book of the Psalter, in

which He shows Himself to be worthy as the acceptable Sacrifice. "All things were created by Him and for Him," but He lives, as the Eternal Son, to present His created Being as the true Oblation to the Father.

No prayer of ours would reach the ear of God unless His Voice filled it with the anointing power of the Holy Ghost, by whose Fellowship we are called to be members of Christ. We must, therefore, be watchful not to speak to God as if we were external to Christ. Christ is not a third party between us and the Father. We are as truly one with Him by regeneration as He is one with the Father by Eternal Generation. We must therefore use these words of the Psalter, not as formularies which He has written or sanctioned for our sakes, but as utterances which He Himself makes for us, His Members, that we may join with Him by the power of the undivided Spirit of life. We appropriate to ourselves His intercession while we use His words.

So, then, He speaks the Psalter, as being the Head of the Church.

His words do not belong to Him as if He possessed a selfish individuality, such as imprisons our personal consciousness. He pleases not Himself. He gives Himself for His Church. He has no desires except for the glorification of His Body as extended in His Members. As God, He has no separate will, but lives in the purpose which the Triune Glory contemplates as its eternal satisfaction. As man, He has no will save for the communication of that glory to those whom the Father has given Him. The greatest events which can befall His Church, and the smallest, are all subordinated to this grand purpose. We, in saying the Psalms, must learn to subordinate all our views and desires of earthly things to this purpose also. Then nothing is small—nothing is great. The infinity of the Divine Love is the

law of prayer, the claim of sacrifice, the warrant of acceptance, the measure of remuneration.

As the Head of the Church, Christ is identified with the fallen race of man, for He has become Incarnate in order to raise us from the condition into which the Fall has brought us. Sin separated man from God, so that all who are naturally born into this world are children of wrath. The Son of God does not lay hold of angels, taking upon Himself an unfallen nature, but He lays hold of the seed of Abraham, taking back into a supernatural covenant those who will accept His invitation with faith, that they may enter into His rest. This we are called to remember day after day as we repeat in our morning service the invitatory Psalm.

In the Psalms, therefore, Christ speaks of the sins of men as being really His own. He does not come to be a substitute for us, so as to bear a penalty which does not belong to Him. He comes to be identified with us, so as to inherit, as man, a penalty which holds Him under its dominion, although not personally meriting it. That inherited penalty He has to bear until He has conquered the great tyrant who claims all mankind as his slave. "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all," not by an unjust demand that He should suffer for what was not His own, but by a mystery of condescension whereby He is identified with the whole mass of humanity. We can but very imperfectly realise what an indivisible unit this humanity is, as it comes from Adam. It is broken up into the countless fragments of personality for the exercise of individual life. The truth of the indivisible unity of human nature, Christ knew in all its fulness when He took it upon Himself. He experienced it in all its fulness, until, by dying, He rescued it from the power of death.

Accordingly, we find that our Lord's ancestry were in

no way shielded from sin. He is, as man, completely identified with the most degraded of mankind, no less than with those who by preventing grace have been drawn to share the supernatural blessings of His Covenant. Hence it is that Holy Scripture calls attention to the sins which at various times marked His genealogy. He came not only to make compensation for sin as the Representative of a faultless line, but to do away with the sin whose taint He inherited, repelling, with a purity that could not be sullied, the taint which touched Him externally, and abiding in the power of the All-holy Spirit which belongs to His Divine Person.

He could, therefore, truly speak of the "sins of His youth," meaning thereby the sins of the Manhood in its earlier days, previous to His Incarnation. Thus while in one sense we speak of the old Adam, and call the regenerate nature the new man, there is also a phraseology in Holy Scripture which speaks of the pre-Christian manhood as the "young man," needing to cleanse His way, and of Christian manhood as the maturity of the race, "the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Some writers object that our Lord in the Gospels never speaks of man's sins as if they were truly His own. (Perowne). Such language would not be suitable for Him after the Incarnation, when speaking from God to man. His Divine Person had raised the Manhood into the purity of God. It is not so in the Psalter. There He speaks to God with a Humanity predestinated indeed, but not yet sanctified. He speaks as the Representative and Heir of the ages that were before Him. He would not have redeemed mankind if He could have found a pure manhood to which He could have allied Himself. He took the pure impersonal elements of our nature from the substance of the Blessed

Virgin, but He did not take them by the process of natural generation. His conception in the womb, though of the old substance, was a new formation of manhood by the power of the Holy Ghost. He did not reject any element of humanity which belonged to His ancestry, as if it were incurably evil, but He purged the elementary manhood from all evil; for the evil which pervaded it was not a part of itself. The evil was a disease. He came to "bear our sicknesses." He had a right to put away the diseases which sin brought upon the bodies of men, because His Divine character once more developed a manhood free from all the sins which occasioned all of our diseases.

He did this by no external process, as if dealing with a substance separate from Himself. He did this by the power of a true interior sympathy. He did not remove the sin by an act of omnipotent superiority, but by an act of omnipotent sensibility. He bewailed the sin in the full consciousness of its evil as an outrage against God, which, as God, He felt to be done against Himself. The outrage could not affect the impassible Godhead, but the Infinite Personality of Godhead gave to His Manhood the capacity of experiencing the full violence of every sin of every man by which the claims of the Godhead were outraged. He bewailed the sin in the full consciousness of the misery which by its recoil it entailed upon mankind. As God He knew the full hatefulness of every sin that was done against God, while as man He felt, with the tenderest sensitiveness of vital sympathy, the sting of sin which throbbed throughout countless personal manhoods as the due result of the countless sins which each had done. As man He felt it for our sakes in brotherly love. This was a penalty from which death alone could set Him free, the physical pain of indissoluble manhood uniting

Him with the multitude of diseased individualities which was made the more intense to himself, because of the organic perfection of the Manhood in which He as Man had to exist.

Death alone could snap the link of sensibility. Death did not destroy the abiding perfection of Divine Love and Brotherly pity.

So did "the Lord lay upon Him the iniquity of us all." It is His reward that He takes us as the members of His risen Body into the fulness of the glory of God, if we, by the power of His grace rise up to love Him as He loved us. For His sake we must "die to sin," as for our sakes He died. We must live in Him partakers of the Father's love, accepting now by faith, as a law of filial obedience, the glory which we hope hereafter to attain as the manifestation of filial unity. "My seed shall serve Him. They shall be counted unto the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and the heavens shall declare His righteousness unto a people that shall be born, for all is His doing" (Ps. 22). As in the Psalms Christ continually identifies Himself with us, in that He bears the consequences of our Fall, so the Psalms teach us constantly, as we recite them, to claim our identification with Him in the covenant of grace, for we share with Him the glory of the discipleship to which He raises us.

We can thus see how it is that He who is the Redeemer speaks of Himself as being redeemed. He who is the Saviour cries out in the Psalms to implore salvation. His Manhood is not a newly created manhood, incapable of fusion with the old sinful manhood which He would redeem, but it is the very original Manhood derived from Adam, and it is raised to a new estate of vital perfection by the Godhead which His Person brings into it to purify it. His holiness is not a tranquil joyous obedience

such as His own Manhood would render if He were exempt from the burden of sin. It is a Divine Passion, a struggle, a resistance to all the pressure of all the sins of all mankind. By the law of the perpetuity of forces, these accumulated powers of evil strike upon Him as the Child born to such an inheritance of evil, and wound His loving Heart so that He has to meet them and repel them by a Divine power inherent within Himself. This reactionary vitality frees Him from the slavery of Death, but not from the crushing pressure of the tyrant. So in Him our nature is redeemed. He makes us partakers of His own Redemption. The floods of ungodliness press upon His Soul. The energy of the Divine Life sustains Him. "He, through the eternal Spirit, offers Himself without spot to God." His appeal for salvation in the Psalms is not to God as an external power, but to the Consubstantial Godhead which, by the Holy Ghost proceeding from Himself, anoints and saves Him. So does He accomplish the atonement. He knows Himself to be one with God. He feels himself to be one with sinful man. As God and Man alike, He hates the sins which as Man He has to bear.

The Psalmist pleads for Himself.

He does not pray for His followers as if they were to be the recipients of Divine favour along with Himself, but He prays for them as identified with Himself, begotten again into a new life through death, a race renewed out of corruption. What they gain, they gain through Him, so that He must exercise it in all its power before it can pass on as an active principle of life from Himself to them.

One with man, the All-holy with the sinful, He meets the crushing force of all man's sin. He longs for men to be made one with Himself as God, the sinful with the All-holy, receiving into themselves the force of the

Divine energy, so as to rise to the Divine Life and cast away the sinfulness of fallen nature. This force they cannot receive *from* Himself nor *through* Himself, but only *in* Himself. His Divine Personality separates the manhood which He assumes and purifies from the mass of humanity which remains external. That corrupt mass which is not incorporated into Him ceases to be true manhood. The life of human organism is passed away from it.

Consequently, when He speaks as Head of the Church, He speaks of the Manhood of His people as being His own. He saves others by giving to them that purified Humanity which He has taken into the Divine Love. His people must die to their own sinful selves that they may live in that Manhood which He gives them, filled with God. The grace of His Passion operates for all the members of His Body, but it does not operate outside of that Divine sphere. So He says: "I pray not for the world, but for those whom Thou hast given Me" (John xvii. 9).

Those who reject Him must therefore bear all the consequences of their sin. The forces of evil which He has repelled from Himself recoil upon all who will not come to be made one with Him.

This necessitates the utterance of the Anathemas which often excite surprise as coming from the lips of a loving Redeemer.*

This Redeemer is the Eternal Word. He is the Judge of all men. He does not welcome any into favour by an arbitrary act of Omnipotence. He restores them by the merits of His Passion, the power of the Holy Ghost. They are redeemed, not so as to remain in their old life, but to rejoice in a Life infinitely more glorious by the

* *Vide Infra.* Section on the Comminatory Psalms.

translation which His death has accomplished. Those who are taken into Himself share this translation, and the righteousness of His Divine power is communicated to them as a law of regeneration.

The rest of mankind are not simply left to themselves. He has suffered for them, and they have rejected His salvation. "It is not His will that any should perish" (2 Pet. iii. 9). It is they who refuse to lay hold upon the power which He will give to all who come with faith to seek the grace inherent in His Body.

How then shall He speak to them? The Word of God cannot be dumb. The Judge of all cannot be indifferent. He who will pronounce doom in the Last Day with the authority of God must warn the sinner. He who pronounced woes against the ungodly in the Gospel must identify Himself with God's judicial determination during the period of the Passion.

We, in our ignorance, may reluctantly accept the Divine judgement. We might cry for pity where God acts in vengeance. Our mind is not one with the Mind of God, either in extent or perpetuity, or detail or power. But the action of God's vengeance is not the exercise of ill-will or solitary resentment. It is the changeless operation of righteous Love to which man, by unbelief, sets himself in antagonism.

The Mind of Christ, on the other hand, must be actively conformed to the Mind of God. His created will cannot fail of union with the Creator's will, for He knows the purpose of God in the government of the universe. He cannot but recognise the goodness of the laws which the Father has ordained. God's glory is the object of His desire: God's goodness is the law of His judgement. He desires the salvation of the elect, not in mere human pity, but that God may in them be glorified. He must equally desire the punishment of the rebellious,

that in them also the righteousness of God may be glorified. His own righteousness, the power whereby He saves the faithful, would be violated if His love to man could act independently of the Love of God, so as to make Him draw back from participation in the laws of Divine severity. As He endured His own Passion, so He must equally accept the punishment denounced against sinful men.

His love for man endured all things according to God's will in this world of discipline. That love cannot follow after man into another world, when man has wandered away from God's love. Here Christ desires their subjugation to Himself, but not in any spirit of human aggrandizement. The Father has sent Him to be the Mediator. Their subjugation to Himself as the God-Man, is the necessary condition of their being elevated to share His filial glory with the Father. They who act in scorn of Him are scorning God.

This leads to the imprecation of temporal misfortune upon His enemies as the expression of Divine Love, for it is by such temporal judgements that sinners may be roused to the necessary obedience. Death unto the world is the necessary preliminary of life unto God. Therefore, besides the eternal penalties which are invoked against such as shall be finally impenitent, we find prayers for the extermination of enemies as a law of providential discipline, that by the extermination of outward form, they may be brought to eternal life by interior, individual regeneration.

The Passion involves the imprecation. The Saviour of mankind must will the doom of the impenitent sinner as fully as He willed His own Passion in order to provide deliverance for the sinner. The imprecations are not the utterance of revenge, for revenge would rob God of His glory in order to attain self-glorification. They

are the utterance of Divine righteousness; for the Righteous Servant desires that they who will not glorify God by accepting His own humiliation may glorify God by the exercise of Divine Judgement upon them.

As Christ speaks thus to the ungodly, so also He calls the faithful to be diligent in their work of praise.

Many exclamations in the Psalms may be taken as the voice of a chorus of the heavenly host. Even in these we must remember that the words originate in the inspired movement of the Word of God, speaking through them as His creatures. The praises of the angel hosts would be comparatively but an inarticulate orchestration if they were not subordinated to His voice in which the fulness of revelation finds its true expression. Man, as being elevated to the Divine glory in Jesus, is the only adequate intelligence in heaven capable of praising the Divine Redeemer, the God-Man. We cannot tell what the tongues of angels are, but it would seem that they are subordinated to the New Song which the regenerate have to sing. The Seraphs veiled their faces while they praised the predestined Humanity of the enthroned Saviour. The Church is "manifesting to the Principalities and Powers in heavenly places the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. iii. 10). Angels adore, as ministering Spirits subservient to the glory of the Redeemed. Each order of heavenly beings has its own share in the Divine glory. It is in man that all the capacities of intelligence and utterance are summed up. Hence, while we are called to praise the Incarnate God in His holiness, it seems as if the nine orders of heaven were to be as living instruments of varied voice, blending with the Word of human utterance which the members of the Incarnate God are called to speak in union with the Christ, the High Priest. He leads the heavenly choir. Trumpet, lute and harp, strings and pipe, cymbals

great and small, tell of various living powers which accompany man's Divinely uttered Halleluyah of adoring love.

The Incarnate Son of God moves all the intelligences of heaven by the impulse of His Holy Spirit. He exults in the glory of the Divine Holiness incarnate in Himself. He gathers His people to exult along with Him, making them to know the mystery of the Eternal Love. He seeks their praise, that through Him their praise may ascend to God. He is not a mere creature seeking the praise of creatures. He is the Divine Mediator calling upon all the intelligences of heaven to praise Him, because He manifests to them in Himself the Father's glory. He calls them to know Himself and live with His life by the power of the Holy Ghost. The praise which we give to Him is the reverberation of the glory wherein He worships the Father. None can know the Father but by His manifestation. None can speak to the Father or praise the Father but by His Mediatorial Power. "No man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. xii. 3).

So must we recognise the voice of Christ sustaining the harmonies of heaven.

Thus, then, when we address Him ourselves in the Psalter, we must feel that it is the Voice of the Head which speaks through us as His members. Our praise is not the mere acknowledgement which external intelligences might make. We praise Him because we live through Him, and we understand what our own Divine life is, by contemplating Him in whom all Divine glory is enshrined. By praising Him as He inspires us to do, we rise to the consciousness of that glory which He Himself possesses. Truly, "He lives in the praises of Israel" (Ps. 22. 4), for those praises are the outcome of His own eternal joyousness.

28 MESSIANIC INTERPRETATION

Created beings can never be worthy of praise, for they have nothing in themselves but what they have received. For a creature to delight in praise is to delight in a lie. But the Creator delights in praise, for the praise which His creatures give to Him is the return of that joyousness of love whereby He delights in them. Not to praise our Creator is to scorn the marvel of His creative goodness. The measure of spiritual advancement in every one of God's creatures is to be found in the measure of loving praise which they give to Him.

III

ON UNITING OURSELVES WITH JESUS IN SAYING THE PSALTER

IN considering the various characters of Christ which operate in Him as the true Speaker of the Psalms, we cannot but wonder at the various relationships to Him which their recitation involves in ourselves. Not our own words, but His! We must not dwarf their meaning to our own littleness. We must rise up to the greatness of His divine intention. In every element of the multi-form character of Christ which the Psalms express, there is a relationship to ourselves which we ought in some way to apprehend while we recite the words along with Him.

His perfect Humanity, His Divine Sonship, His predestinated Sovereignty, His worldly rejection, His endurance of enemies, His reliance upon the Father, His continual self-oblation, His humiliation in struggling against sin, the calumny, the persecution, His solitary witness to the ever-living Truth, His foreknowledge of a people which should have life through His Name, His unshaken stability amidst the darkness of the powers of death, His consolation of His faithful ones, His Resurrection and Joy, His Ascension and the building up of the Heavenly Jerusalem, the acceptableness of His sacrifice, His prayer and fasting on behalf of His enemies, His

watchful observance of the Law of the Lord, His Kingdom of peace and spiritual plenty, His triumph in the midst of all the hosts of heaven, the exaltation of His people to reign along with Him, His abiding enthronement amidst Halleluyahs, making God manifest to all creation and lifting up the creatures to exult in the Divine glory—such are some of the aspects of His Being which the Psalter portrays. We have to consider them not as abstract truths, but as principles of vital communion between God and man which demand a lively concurrence on our own part, and we must be filled with the glow of His Divine Life if we are to rise up to the necessary sympathies.

Many of the Psalms may seem but in a few phrases to go beyond what we ourselves might say. In them we have to feel the Messianic interpretation as giving a heavenly dignity to the words, and therefore also lifting up our own lives from the dulness of earthly monotony to the thrilling ecstasy of Divine Love.

The saying of the Psalter in union with Christ must therefore quicken our spiritual perceptions to contemplate Christ in ourselves and ourselves in Him. We must live the Psalter along with Christ if we would say the Psalter along with Him, for it does but formulate His life. Thus does the Psalter call forth the highest energies of the life of faith, by which we lay hold upon the invisible.

How important it is for us to say the Psalms with an understanding heart, and not profane the Divine Spirit which hallows our lips! We have to learn the melody of heaven while joining with Christ now glorified. The various characteristics of Christ's Personality constitute the very harmony of heaven. Some parts belong to our earthly struggles which He condescended to share. We must speak them in the grace of His Passion. A per-

petuating sympathy must lift us up to speak the words with a consciousness that grace abides although the suffering has been changed into glory, and that we must experience with loving fellowship the grace of the suffering if we are to find the blessedness of the triumphant joy into which it is transformed. He calls us elsewhere to share His glory. We must rise up to the full measure of His exaltation, that we may speak the words as being ourselves the children of the Heavenly Kingdom.

We must say the Psalter with the consciousness that it is the glorious inheritance of the Communion of Saints. What multitudes have been perfected in the life of Christ while these words of power filled their hearts, rose from their lips, ruled their lives, checked their fears, deepened their penitence, stimulated their hopes, formulated their thanksgivings, spiritualised their aspirations, glorified their aims, brightened their sufferings, supported them in weariness, encouraged them in their struggle, transfigured the dulness of earthly circumstance with the brilliance of heavenly realities! And now the Psalter is not to them a thing of the past. It lives in the glory of Jesus, and their knowledge of the relationship between themselves and Him which its continual use exhibited, is the very life of the glory wherein they too rejoice along with Him and look to reign united in the endless Halleluyah which is the bliss of Heaven. Whatever may be the energies of a glorified life in which the Blessed shall carry out God's Will throughout the ages of eternity, the Psalter wherein the mind was united with Jesus in the discipline of earth, shall be the Law of Divine Wisdom which they shall carry out along with Him. The old song of earthly ignorance shall swell out in the New Song of Heavenly Triumph and Divine Life.

So must we find the perfect union of our whole being

along with Jesus in saying the Psalter. Angels welcomed the Incarnate Word at Bethlehem. Angels look for that Word to speak forth and lead them onwards in heavenly jubilation. It is for us so to take our part therein, that when the song attains its fulness of development our voices may not be hushed.

IV

ON THE ANALYSIS OF THE PSALTER

IN order to use the Psalter intelligently, it is important that we should have some idea of its structure. The arrangement of the Five Books is not a mere chronological theory. To some extent it may be the result of successive editorship; but the necessities of successive compilation do not meet the facts of the case. It will be manifest to any one who gives a little attention that there are successive groupings based upon subject matter, and yet there are many individual Psalms inserted without apparent reference to authorship, chronology or subject.

It is plain that the date of composition has not settled where any of the Psalms should stand, except in a very general way. Most of the Davidic Psalms are placed in the first two Books, and the Post-Exile Psalms are at the end, but this does not interfere with scattered groups.

Nor, again, are the Psalms arranged as the Hymns of a modern collection might be, with reference to mysteries which they celebrate, whether of sorrow or joy. There is a constant transition from one to the other. Indeed the nature of the Psalms precludes such an arrangement, for the same Psalms generally range from sorrow to joy. The deeper is the experience of Christ's Passion as set forth in any Psalm, the loftier will be the aspirations of triumph. They are not like Hymns written to suit our

feelings during various Church Seasons, but in all their brevity they sum up the whole scheme of Divine Love. This is part of their Divine character. They are not given to us for the satisfaction of particular contemplation, but they are the utterance of Divine Wisdom seeing all things at a glance from beginning to end. They belong to Christ's Eternity.

People speak of Messianic Psalms, but we cannot make any such selection. The more the Psalms are studied, the more will it be felt that all of them are really Messianic. Those which do not bring into prominence the great redemptive acts of our Lord's ministry, require the infinity of His moral character in His relation to the Eternal Father in order that their expressions of righteous self-confidence may be justified. They are not utterances of human devotion which our Lord condescended to use along with us, that we might hear. They are the utterance of His inmost Being in struggle with Satan while He glorifies God whether in endurance or in victory, looking up to the Father's Love as accepting His zeal for the Father's glory. They are utterances of Divine Inspiration, and although they had their occasion in certain events of David's life, or Jewish history, they require the dimensions of the Divine Mystery to justify the words. That Divine significance is required by them, whether as originally spoken "in the Spirit" by David, or now used by ourselves as Christ's members in His Holy Church. Moreover, as the whole moral character of Christ is based upon Divine relationships, so even expressions of moral truth imply and necessitate certain Divine mysteries.

Psalms, again, which from their acknowledgement of sin might seem to us to be removed from all possibility of Messianic application, are often specially assigned to Christ by some phrase which suits no other speaker.

Is the arrangement, then, entirely fortuitous? Surely we feel an antecedent conviction that there must be some arrangement, and that not merely of a verbal or technical kind. The Psalter is evidently so instinct with life, that we feel there must be some plan for the development of its structure. Does it then contain any suggestive indications by which we may separate off certain portions as subsections, each of them possessing its own separate character, although each of them having its own proper place with reference to the whole collection?

If there is any such plan, we may expect that—in a work carried out under the controlling power of God—the details of the plan will be ordered with the same minute accuracy which marks the works of God in nature. At the same time, it does not follow that because we can observe one plan, therefore it is the only, or even the principal, one. Anything that is carefully arranged will commonly be recognisable under various aspects. Astronomers perceived that the heavenly bodies moved by fixed laws, although they formed quite erroneous theories as to what those laws were. Gradually the simplicity of truth shone out. Nevertheless, had there been no laws of arrangement, their own theories never would have been invented. Chaos does not tolerate such explanations.

The arrangement proposed in this introduction has been chiefly based upon the Titles to the Psalms. There may be other methods more helpful and more fundamental. This suggestion does not interfere with any other. It is, however, sufficiently definite to avoid the danger of merely arbitrary and subjective imagination. If the result is such as to indicate a law operating throughout the collection, we are free to make what exegetical deductions we like. The Psalms may gain by such classification: they cannot lose.

Any one can see the Headings in the Authorised Version of the Bible. Some of them are merely musical directions, and we have scarcely sufficient knowledge of their meaning to allow of our gaining much information by means of them. Nevertheless, their presence indicates some importance in the Psalm, and may sometimes serve to link two Psalms together so that they avail for mutual illustrations.

Other Headings attach certain Psalms to well-known events in David's life.

Here we come face to face with sharp controversy. There is a school of critics which treats them as simply nugatory. They are to be set aside! There is nothing in the Psalm which, according to the critics' judgement, suits the proposed occasion! To this objection, the reply is, of course, not far to seek. The absence of any apparent appropriateness is itself an evidence of truth, for it is not likely that the occasion would have been selected when it was manifestly unsuitable. It is evidently a matter of tradition. Now, certainly the Headings have been where they are from time immemorial. The Jews always regarded them as a part of the Psalm itself. Consequently, as will be seen in this Version, the numbering of the verses of a Psalm always includes the Heading as supplying the first verse, sometimes more than one verse, of the Psalm itself.

The absence of Headings is as remarkable as their presence. We might have expected to find Headings prefixed to Psalms which have none.

For instance, why are Psalms 10. and 23. left "orphan" when there can scarcely be any doubt that they are David's, like the Psalms alongside of them?

In the present analysis an endeavour will be made to use these Headings or their absence as intimations of some subsectional peculiarity. The omission of David's

name leaves the preceding group as a separate entity. The insertion of a special occasion may imply that the Psalm belongs to a series.

If upon investigation it is found that these groups have almost always a noticeable and significant number, then the hint, thus given, acquires greater force. The following analysis shows that the Psalms seem to break up into Trilogies, Heptads, Octaves and Quindecads, a result not at all conceived by the present author when the analysis was commenced.

The unchronological character of the sequences adds great force to this remarkable result. If a Psalm is put out of its chronological order and yet falls in with its proper mystical relation to the subsection where it occurs, then the appearance of moral intention is proportionately heightened.

No doubt persons may at first be staggered if the events thus signalled are at variance with our natural anticipations as to what God should use for the purpose of edifying. That, however, is an objection which applies to the whole of 'God's moral government of the world. "His thoughts are not our thoughts." Things do not seem to have power or resultfulness proportionately to what we should have imagined. God often accomplishes great good by agencies which we should have been inclined altogether to set aside. Trivialities sometimes have the greatest issues.

So is it in Holy Scripture. The things recorded are frequently such as an uninspired writer would not have cared to record. God has chosen them. And why? They serve the mystical purposes of Divine teaching. Trivial as they are in themselves, they catch some ray of Divine power. They are like a broken bit of glass shining in the sun. Indeed God would have us learn that there is nothing great in the world, and He can

produce what He wishes by means of things most contemptible. It may happen also that an act which was sinful in itself typifies some mystery of grace. The violation of moral proportion which makes an act sinful, as an act between man and man, may serve to symbolise the action of a supernatural relationship in which the Creator deals with His creatures. The disproportion of the act may serve to illustrate the Divine Mystery, whereas the impropriety of the act belonged to the human agents, so that it does not live on in the Divine operation which it served to outline. Sometimes an occasion that has no beauty of holiness to commend it may cause a prophet to chaunt a "song of lovely things" in the development of God's holy Providence. The similarity of outward events does not imply Divine Blessing. The Prophet does not sing as a Court poet, but he calls the minds of hearers to penitence while he sets the holy transaction of God's Love as a contrast by way of warning against the present ungodly boast. A type must always come short of the antitype. The one is finite, the other infinite. We must always look to see what there is which makes the type important. A type is not to be recognized as such merely because of a general similarity between an earthly event and a heavenly. What we have to look for in a type is just the point of its failure. When we know where the type fails of likeness to the antitype, while the antitype results in consequences which the type cannot reach, then it is that we can learn the lesson which the type in its weakness has to teach. Then we can profit by the superhuman bearings of the antitype.

That God should use the conduct of sinners in their generation as means of teaching for His people in heavenly things, is not wonderful, when we remember that the Divine conduct thus typified was itself made necessary by man's sin. Divine goodness overrules

sinful events, uses sinful agents, triumphs over sin by superhuman power. No act of mere human morality can set man free from the entanglements of sin. There must be a supernatural intervention on the part of God, and man must break away from natural ties in order to co-operate with that intervention. It is to be feared that men often object to the mystical symbolism of Holy Scripture as being unworthy of God, just because they do not themselves recognise the true evil of sin which has to be done away. God does not approve actions because He may use them as types. Man must humble himself for the sinfulness of humanity while he adores the goodness of God in effecting our recovery.

The rotten organism of our sinful humanity becomes the organic basis of the Mediatorial power of our Divine Redeemer. He did not purify our human nature in order that He might assume it when purified. He purifies our nature by the act of assuming it. When the mystical meaning of sacred incidents is recognized, it will not only remove the insinuation of unseemliness, timidity, or sin, it will serve to elicit in ordinary life a reverent regard of Divine superintendence, dignity and sanctification.

Events gain an importance by mystical interpretation which would otherwise be inexplicable, and thus we may see that Psalms which have no bearing upon David's conduct may have a distinct bearing upon some Divine truth which David's conduct involved.

To take the Headings as a guide in marking out the sections of the Psalter will plainly save us from the danger of arbitrary criticism to which any exercise of the mere æsthetic judgment is exposed. If certain numerical proportions become manifest, which we should not have recognised independently, then we have good reason to suppose that these sectional divisions are

really a mechanical basis on which the Psalter is constructed.

But further, if we find that these small sections have generally a character of their own, bringing certain aspects of our Lord's ministry before us in the proper sequence of Divine mysteries, then we can recognise that this numerical mechanism is no mere lifeless structure. Each part belongs to a properly developed spiritual organism of which the Psalter is the exponent. If we find that the results thus obtained through the Headings are true to the Christian faith, according to certain fixed principles of mystical interpretation not invented for this purpose, but recognised as laws of spiritual thought by the devotional instincts of the Church, then we shall feel that these Headings must be true, however much they may baffle some of our preconceived ideas.

Such a minute care in forming the volume of inspiration is surely what we might expect from Him who is the Author of the material universe. We accept Kepler's laws, because we find that the heavenly bodies fulfil their requirements, but the subtle proportions which they enunciate would have seemed to us inconceivably improbable if it were not that they stand the test of investigation. We must not be surprised if we find the laws of spiritual harmony baffling our anticipations by their technicality, while yet, like the objects of mechanical observation, they are perfectly simple in their statement. God seeks child-like faith to look to Him.

The symbolical interpretation of Holy Scripture, when carried out, not by fanciful explanation of isolated facts, but in simple acceptance of fixed laws rigorously applied, seems to be an unimpeachable demonstration of the Divine character of the writings which admit of such interpretation. Doubtless many have been held back

from accepting such mystical exegesis by the arbitrary manner in which Holy Scripture has been expounded. The object of the analysis upon which we are about to enter is to set aside all arbitrary manipulation of details, and to subordinate all spiritual imagination to the undeniable facts of the document as it comes to us.

Besides its value as a proof of Divine inspiration, the investigation of the structure of the Psalter will be found eminently conducive to an intellectual apprehension of its contents, and consequently to a reverent use of the Psalms in devotion. People are too apt to recite Psalms with little or no idea of their real meaning, whereas if the relation of the separate Psalms to other Psalms around them is duly perceived, the Psalms, one and all, shine out with a lustre such as to quicken an intense consciousness of adoration while we rise to participate in the glory of Christ the Mediator.

An harmonious arrangement of a hundred and fifty Psalms, so as to satisfy the mystical theory of numbers, is an extraordinary evidence, not of the inspiration of individual Psalms, but of the editorial supervision by which they have been brought together. No human editor could have undertaken such a task. If he had attempted it, he would not have left the results of his toil to be so completely hidden from ordinary notice. But indeed the Psalms were written under Divine control, and that control has put each one of them in the proper place.

The difficulty is enhanced by yet another consideration. It seems as if each Psalm in some manner embodied the idea which its numerical position symbolises. In some of the decades this is very noticeable. In others it is not so plain. But we have thus two schemes of numerical mysticism operating concurrently. We might well have thought that the two arrangements

must clash. In a harmony as strange as it is strong they work together! It is like the working together of two themes in a fugue by the skill of a great composer.

A list of the Psalms with numerical value attached to them will be given in a subsequent essay, but as such numerical views would not be acceptable to many readers for whom this Commentary is intended, it may be stated at the outset that the Commentary is written so as to be entirely free from any numerical considerations. The Commentary is quite independent, although persons who may value the theory of numbers will find the hints contained in that Essay highly illustrative of what the words of the Psalter themselves suggest.

The more we recognise the Divine power superintending the structure, the more must we feel the Divine life and beauty in each separate Psalm. Probably the inspired Psalmist knew very little of the meaning of the words which God caused him to write. He knew that by his words he was "ministering unto us the things which are made known to us by the Gospel" (1 Pet. i. 12), that we might experience God's power in this last age of the world. We might value the Psalter if we knew of it as coming to us merely from man: we must love it absorbingly if we feel that it comes to us from God. Each Psalm has its place, not only as a stone in a lifeless mosaic, but as a part of a living structure. It matters very little that we should know who may have written this or that Psalm, but it would be as a beautiful corpse ready to pass into corruption, if we did not feel that it had a Divine life and immortality. It was written "in the Spirit." It was written to testify of Christ. We need not think whether this or that man could have written such or such a Psalm, if we fully understand that each one of the Psalms is such that no man could have written it. The Holy Ghost inspired

the writing. The Holy Ghost has watched over the Psalter. Christ, when He was upon earth, appropriated it as His own special formulary of devotion. Now that Christ is ascended to Heaven, He calls us to use it in union with Himself.

In the following Table there is a double heading assigned to each Psalm.

The left-hand column is intended to bring out especially the Personal reference in the Psalm to Messiah. The right-hand column treats it as awaking a kindred spirit of devotional utterance in ourselves as His members, sharing His earthly relationships in this world of evil and His heavenly glory in the kingdom of grace.

ANALYTICAL CONSPECTUS OF THE PSALTER.

BOOK I.—PSALMS 1-41

THE INCARNATE REDEEMER.

Forty-one Psalms of Human Probation.

INTRODUCTORY.

The Son of Man	Ps. 1.	Union with Christ as the Head of the Body, the Church.
The Son of God	Ps. 2.	Union with Christ as the Eternal Son of God.

FIRST QUINDECAD.

CHRIST IN HIMSELF AND IN HIS CHURCH.

I.—THE SOLITARY STRUGGLER.

Trilogy of the Sacrifice of Righteousness.

The entrance upon the struggle	Ps. 3.	Following Christ amidst difficulties.
The peaceful death of the Accepted One	Ps. 4.	The blessedness of dying with Christ.
The daily morning sacrifice	Ps. 5.	Pleading Christ's Sacrifice as a living power.
	*	
The Sin-Bearer	Ps. 6.	The penitent in his bondage.

Trilogy of the World Beyond.

Conquest of Satan by Christ's Descent into Hell	Ps. 7.	Hiding in the grave of Jesus.
Coronation of manhood in Christ	Ps. 8.	The regenerating covenant.
God coming in judgement to deliver His people	Ps. 9.	The experience of God's covenanted love.
	*	
An anonymous Psalm	Ps. 10.	The need of steadfast hope in days of apostacy.

II.—THE DISCIPLINE OF GRACE.

Trilogy of the Church in Worldly Weakness.

The feebleness of God's chosen people	Ps. 11.	Confidence in Divine protection.
The announcement of the Incarnation	Ps. 12.	Refuge in the Incarnate Saviour.
The long-continued expectation of God's chosen people	Ps. 13.	The soul feeling the desolation of sin.
	*	
God seeking a man after His own heart	Ps. 14.	The faithful captive expecting a Deliverer.

Trilogy of the Divine Likeness.

The Divine Pattern	Ps. 15.	The likeness of Jesus.
To life through death	Ps. 16.	Burial with Christ.
Heavenly satisfaction in conformity with God	Ps. 17.	The Saints perfected in Christ's likeness.

SECOND QUINDECAD.

REDEMPTION PERFECTING THE WORK OF CREATION.

I.—CHRIST'S PERSONAL MINISTRY.

Trilogy of the Divine Mission.

The Elect Servant and Son of God, rising from the Egypt of the world	Ps. 18.	The deliverance of the regenerate soul.
God, Creator, Legislator, and Redeemer	Ps. 19.	Praise to God in nature and in grace.
The welcome of the Saviour King	Ps. 20.	The power of Christ's Name.
*		
The celebration of Messiah's victory	Ps. 21.	Confidence in Christ's triumphant power.

Trilogy of the Avenger's Conflict.

The redemptive struggle and victory	Ps. 22.	The faithful communicant's fellowship in the Redeemer's struggle.
The Exodus of the Redeemed	Ps. 23.	The flock of the Good Shepherd.
The triumphal procession of the Ascension	Ps. 24.	Union with Jesus in His triumph.
*		
The intercession of the Righteous Redeemer for His people	Ps. 25.	The pathway of life.

II.—THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY.

Trilogy of Renewal through Mediatorial Grace.

The Lord our Righteousness	Ps. 26.	Fellowship with the Divine Sacrifice.
Light and life in the Divine fruition	Ps. 27.	The Divine inheritance of the faithful.
The struggle concluded	Ps. 28.	The protection of the faithful.
*		
The Song of the Seven Thunders: the Divine Word	Ps. 29.	The joy of the faithful in the Divine majesty of Jesus.

Trilogy of Redeemed Humanity.

The Temple of His risen Body	Ps. 30.	The Divine security of the risen life.
The Divine Redeemer: eternal life in God	Ps. 31.	The Divine life a hidden life.
The blessedness of renewal in Christ: a meditation	Ps. 32.	The watchful obedience of the accepted penitent.

CLOSING NOVENA.

THE HEAVENLY WORSHIP.

Trilogy of the Divine Sovereignty.

The Divine life of the New Creation	Ps. 33.	The predestination of grace perfected in the Resurrection.
The Angel of the Covenant	Ps. 34.	Protection amidst the Divine discipline.
The Angel of Vengeance	Ps. 35.	The confidence of the soul in the redemption wrought by Christ.

Trilogy of the Faithful People.

The expectation of the meek	Ps. 36.	Humble faith contrasted with unbelieving pride.
The patience of the saints	Ps. 37.	The martyr spirit.
The confidence of the Sin-Bearer	Ps. 38.	The penitent's reliance upon Christ.

Trilogy of the Acceptable Sacrifice.

Human nothingness as experienced by the Incarnate Word	Ps. 39.	The vanity of the world in the presence of God.
The Body prepared for personal self-oblation	Ps. 40.	The glorious purpose of God's will.
The blessedness of recognizing by faith the chosen One of God	Ps. 41.	The delivery of the faithful soul from the treachery of the flesh.

BOOK II.—PSALMS 42-72.

CHRIST THE DIVINE HEAD OF THE CHURCH.

Thirty-one Psalms of the Consubstantial Sonship.

NOVENA.

*IN HONOUR OF GOD THE FATHER PREDESTINATING A CHOSEN PEOPLE.**Trilogy of Exile and Sorrow.*

Messiah thirsting for the Divine manifestation	Ps. 42.	The soul needing God's manifestation as its true life.
The expectation of the Humanity in its earthly exile	Ps. 43.	The soul looking forward to resurrection in Divine life.
The Song of the Redeemed amidst outward dereliction	Ps. 44.	The patience of the saints when God seems to have forsaken them.

Trilogy of Divine Fellowship.

The Hero Bridegroom coming to redeem	Ps. 45.	The saints rejoicing in the heavenly Bridegroom.
The joyful song of the Church militant	Ps. 46.	God Himself the security of His people.
The invitation of the Church Catholic	Ps. 47.	The Ascension of Christ a call to missionary zeal.

Trilogy of Consummation.

The City of God in the completeness of her predestination	Ps. 48.	The glorious contemplation of the heavenly Jerusalem
The doom of the nations of the earth	Ps. 49.	Reliance upon Divine redemption.
The Sacrifice of Jubilee	Ps. 50.	The Theophany of the Conqueror.

THIRD QUINDECAD.

*IN HONOUR OF GOD THE SON ACTING IN OUR NATURE.**Trilogy of the Sin-Bearer.*

God appearing in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin	Ps. 51.	The cleansing virtue of the Incarnation.
The overthrow of Antichrist	Ps. 52.	Defiance of the world through confidence in Christ.
The Incarnation testing the nations of the world	Ps. 53.	The folly of the wicked who set God aside.

Trilogy of Persecution.

The carnal opposition of the human heart to Christ	Ps. 54.	The confidence of the faithful amidst the assaults of Satan.
Christ and Antichrist	Ps. 55.	The weary burden of the besetting sin.
The Eternal Word silent in the house of the great Goliath	Ps. 56.	The confident thankfulness of the trembling soul.

Trilogy of the Crucifixion.

The confident hope of the dying One	Ps. 57.	The soul under the oppression of the powers of darkness.
The Descent into Hell	Ps. 58.	The Prince of this world and his followers rebuked.
The Escape	Ps. 59.	The soul lifted up in Christ above the machinations of the world

Trilogy of Victory.

The Royal Banner set up	Ps. 60.	The acceptance of the Cross as the standard of victory.
The eternity of the Kingdom	Ps. 61.	The inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven.
The security of the faithful in the Kingdom that cannot be moved	Ps. 62.	Divine strength perfected in human weakness.

Trilogy of the Resurrection.

The expected Morn	Ps. 63.	The resurrection of the soul by grace.
The trustful expectation of vindication from God	Ps. 64.	The blessedness of those who are persecuted for righteousness sake.
The Harvest Song of the Great Day	Ps. 65.	Praise due to God both in nature and in grace.

HEPTAD.

IN HONOUR OF GOD, THE HOLY GHOST, GUIDING THE CHURCH.

The deliverance of the Church from the world's power	Ps. 66.	Deliverance in the midst of judgement.
The Church the Evangelizer of the world	Ps. 67.	The life of faith stimulating the song of praise.
The Church marching in Pentecostal power	Ps. 68.	The power of the Divine indwelling.
The judicial character of the Passion	Ps. 69.	The individual soul in conflict with its great enemies.
The cry for judgement	Ps. 70.	The sympathies of the Body of Christ.
The mystery of the Church militant	Ps. 71.	The hidden life of the soul in expectation of future blessedness.
The Kingdom of Peace	Ps. 72.	The soul rejoicing in the sovereignty of Christ.

BOOK III.—PSALMS 73.-89.

THE DIVINE SONSHIP OF THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM.

SEVENTEEN PSALMS OF CHRIST'S LIFE IN US.

INTRODUCTORY.

God the true good, wherein Israel may rejoice	Ps. 73.	Joy in God contrasted with prosperity in the world.
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Trilogy of the Holy Name.

The outward weakness of the Church in the world	Ps. 74.	Confidence in God's Name through long-continued periods of outward distress.
God upholding her by His Name	Ps. 75.	The triumph of righteousness in eternal life.
God's presence with His people, the terror of the enemy	Ps. 76.	God vindicating His covenant people.

Trilogy of Probation.

The secret preparation for God's appearance	Ps. 77.	Preparation to follow Christ as redeeming us from the world's oppression.
The disciplinary guidance of God's people amidst their rebellions	Ps. 78.	The responsibility of the Divine Covenant.
The appeal of the penitent race for deliverance	Ps. 79.	The test of perseverance.

Octave Psalm.

The Son of God the Restorer of the Vine of Israel	Ps. 80.	Penitential desires awakened by the memory of saints.
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Trilogy of the Divine Word.

The Divine Call to Israel	Ps. 81.	God's gifts held back by disobedience.
The Divine Predestination and Judgement	Ps. 82.	Divine predestination proving us in all the relationships of life.
The overthrow of God's enemies	Ps. 83.	Separation from the world which is left to perish in its success.

Trilogy of Grace.

The joy of God's House	Ps. 84.	The blessedness of abiding in Christ.
The Covenant of Grace	Ps. 85.	The Divine favour assured to us.
The prayer of the risen Mediator	Ps. 86.	The Divine strength comforting us.

Trilogy of New Birth.

The regenerate life of the City of God	Ps. 87.	The joy of the communion of saints.
The prisoners of hope	Ps. 88.	Confidence amidst the pains of death.
The eternal reality of the communicated Sonship	Ps. 89.	Divine protection, preparing for the Kingdom to come.

BOOK IV.—PSALMS 90-106.

THE DIVINE GLORY OF THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM.

SEVENTEEN PSALMS OF OUR LIFE IN CHRIST.

THE ROYAL DECAD.

Trilogy of Redemption.

The bondage of vanity	Ps. 90.	The Bosom of God the dwelling-place of the elect.
The Divinely guarded Warrior	Ps. 91.	The Guardian Angel.
The expectation of coming glory	Ps. 92.	The mystical, eternal life in the grave of Christ.

Trilogy of Enthronement.

The glory of the Resurrection Body	Ps. 93.	Participation in the Throne of Jesus.
The vengeance threatened	Ps. 94.	Persecution continuing.
Messiah, the King, calling the people to accept His yoke	Ps. 95.	The call to faithfulness.

Trilogy of the New Song.

The Righteous Judge	Ps. 96.	The New Song of Righteousness.
The All-holy King	Ps. 97.	The Light of Life.
The welcome of Jesus	Ps. 98.	The Song of Salvation.
*		
THE TER SANCTUS	Ps. 99.	Holy, Holy, Holy.

CLOSING HEPTAD.

THE GREAT RESPOND Ps. 100. The exultation of the Church Catholic.

Trilogy of Sanctification.

The Kingdom of Truth Ps. 101. The self-dedication of the Psalmist.
 The penitential discipline of the Church Ps. 102. Individual penitence calling us to faith in Christ
 amidst general calamities.
 The final glory of the Covenant Ps. 103. Gratitude for the resurrection.

Halleluyatic Trilogy of the development of the Kingdom.

The Divine Presence operative under the veil
 of the original creation Ps. 104. The earth the cradle of a new creation.
 The Divine Sonship vindicated by the judge-
 ments on Egypt Ps. 105. The promise to the fathers.
 The Divine purpose abiding in spite of man's
 unfaithfulness Ps. 106. Faith looking forward amidst continuous evil to the
 promised glory of Jerusalem.

BOOK V.—PSALMS 107.-150.

GOING UP TO JERUSALEM.

FORTY-FOUR SONGS OF THE REDEEMED.

INTRODUCTORY.

Summons to the sons of men Ps. 107. A memorial song of praise on behalf of the redeemed.

Trilogy of Redeeming Power.

The Redeemer exulting in victory Ps. 108. Conquering and to conquer.
 The wrath of the Lamb Ps. 109. The word of truth and the word of falsehood.
 The Priest upon His Throne Ps. 110. The rod of power.

Halleluyatic Trilogy of the Covenant.

The Eternal Covenant of Melchizedek Ps. 111. The Eucharistic Memorial of the Everlasting Covenant.
 The Christ-conformity of the redeemed Ps. 112. The Offspring of the Covenant of Righteousness.
 The Divine Seed gathered out of all nations Ps. 113. The Redeemer the Life of the world.

An Octave Psalm.

Nature travailing with the Offspring of grace Ps. 114. The new exodus.

Halleluyatic Trilogy of Eternal Life.

The living God Ps. 115. Living in God's Name.
 The life of the saints beyond the grave Ps. 116. The freedom from death.
 The Halleluyah of the Universal Church Ps. 117. Rejoicing with the saints.
 THE TRIUMPH OF JAH Ps. 118. The opening of the Heavenly Sanctuary.
 THE WAY OF LIFE Ps. 119. The blessed multitude pressing in.

N.B.—Pss. 113.-118. are what were sung at the Passover as the EGYPTIAN HALLEL.

FOURTH QUINDECAD.

THE SONGS OF ASCENT.

The predestined Humanity in the bondage of the flesh	Ps. 120.	The child of peace in the land of the enemy.
Do. in the expectation of Divine life	Ps. 121.	The home of heavenly hope.
Do. in the joy of the sanctuary	Ps. 122.	The repose of the saints.
Do. in the security of Divine service	Ps. 123.	Waiting for God's mercy.
Do. in deliverance from the waters of the grave	Ps. 124.	The escaped bird.
The City of Righteousness in her stability	Ps. 125.	The goodness of God the reward of the righteous.
Do. in her exodus from captivity	Ps. 126.	Weeping and reaping.
Do. in her fruitfulness as the Household of Christ	Ps. 127.	Lifeless work and fruitful life.
Do. in her perpetuity	Ps. 128.	The blessing of abiding peace.
Do. in her triumphant vindication from all her enemies	Ps. 129.	The waster of God's people withering away.
The Incarnate God, humbled for man's redemption	Ps. 130.	Wailing and waiting.
Do. bearing the discipline of life in separation from the Father's glory	Ps. 131.	The trustful weanling.
Do. a Priest upon the Throne of David	Ps. 132.	The enthronement of the Ark of the Covenant.
Do. gathering the people into the fellowship of the Divine unction	Ps. 133.	The unity of Divine Love.
Do. glorified in His people on the heavenly height	Ps. 134.	The benedictory welcome of the pilgrims.

Trilogy of the Presence Chamber.

Jah, the living God, reigning in Jerusalem	Ps. 135.	Waking to life in God's praise.
THE GREAT HALLEL	Ps. 136.	Absorption in God's eternal goodness.
The cry for vengeance upon the world	Ps. 137.	Looking backward to bondage and forward to vindication.

Octave of Davidic Psalms.

Redemption perfected	Ps. 138.	The perfection of our faith.
The glory of the Redeemer's eternal Predestination	Ps. 139.	The omniscient, omnipresent God.
The struggle of the Seed of the woman against the seed of the serpent	Ps. 140.	Appeal for deliverance.
The patient prayer of faith	Ps. 141.	The redemptive Sacrifice.
The deliverance of the faithful	Ps. 142.	The prayer of the earthly prison-house.
The final prayer ere the soul of Jesus enters Hades	Ps. 143.	Longing for life and liberty.
The happiness of the Son of Man in the substantial fruition of God	Ps. 144.	The new song of the beloved.
The final Alphabet of Praise	Ps. 145.	The experience of the saints.

Halleluyatic Pentateuch of Praise.

To the beneficent Lord of Providence; ninefold	Ps. 146.	Happiness in the fellowship of Messiah.
To the covenant Lord of Revelation; fivefold	Ps. 147.	The Heavenly Jerusalem.
To the sovereign Lord of the Universe; fourfold	Ps. 148.	The universal appeal.
To the redeeming Lord of new Life; twofold. He is the beginning and the ending of the Church militant	Ps. 149.	Preparing to join in the heavenly praise.
To Jesus enthroned above the ninefold Heavens; twofold. He is the beginning and the ending of the glorified universe	Ps. 150.	The Choirs of Heaven.

BOOK I

THE INCARNATE REDEEMER

INTRODUCTORY—PSS. I., 2.

THESE two Psalms form an introduction to the whole Psalter. They were formerly united together in some copies. They set forth Messiah as the Hero of the Divine Poem which is to follow, a Poem manifold, yet one. Each Psalm has its individual purpose and value, but we are not to think of the Psalter as a mere collection of Psalms. It has a unity of life and purpose. Each Psalm has its own proper place in the collection. The five Books are not merely successive compilations. The Psalmists are all filled with one spirit, illuminated with one vision, consecrated to one object. The glory of Messiah wakens all their utterances. Beginning with His struggles against the powers of darkness in this evil world, they carry onward the thought of His heavenly kingdom, until the Halleluyahs of Heaven ring out with the triumphant clearness of the Temple on high where sin can no longer disturb the song, but all rejoice to live with the Spirit of God whose praises they proclaim.

The first two Psalms are intended to bring Messiah before us as the Ideal Man, whose joy is in the law of the Lord, and the Divine Sovereign who is Himself the joy of all that put their trust in Him. His kingdom is established by Divine power in the midst of a sinful

world, but as He is the joy of the faithful, so also He is their security amidst all enemies.

Happy is He.

Happy are they that take refuge in Him.

In this double proclamation of happiness, the Psalmist anticipates the benedictory welcome of the last day, when the enthroned King of Zion shall gather His people to Himself, bidding each one of them enter into the joy of his Lord.

Psalm I. is supposed to belong to the time of Solomon. The scoffers are the free-thinkers of his day, so called in the Proverbs frequently.

This Psalm develops the Blessing pronounced by Joshua. Jeremiah adopts its words as an antithesis to the curse which he utters against Jehoiakim (Jer. xvii. 5-10). The later prophet remodels the quotation according to his wont. The Psalm is the original. Nothing but arbitrary self-will could lead one to imagine that this Psalm, so brief, so pregnant, so beautiful, so suited for its position, was itself adopted from a writer so given to reproduction as Jeremiah was.

The Psalter begins like the Sermon on the Mount, with the proclamation of happiness. Religion cannot be vital which acts merely through necessity. It must be a work of joy to serve God. The service of God is the Psalter of life, and the Psalter of the lips were vain if it found not its embodiment in the joyful sacrifice of a loving obedience.

The Psalter begins with declaring the happiness of man, and ends with the ascription of praise to God. None can praise God in the fruition of eternity, save those who have found their happiness in obedience to God under the discipline of time.

The happiness of the one perfect ideal man is found

in Ps. 119, spreading itself forth to all His members, who are perfect in union with Him, as the Way, and seek the Lord with their whole heart.

The law of God cannot be obeyed truly without searching into the hidden truth upon which it is based. God's appointments are not arbitrary or accidental. They promote the well-being of man, because they spring out of eternal principles of moral truth, existent within the Being of God, whose image man bears.

Man's happiness does not consist in what he has, but in what he is. External goods may elicit the activity of delight, but they cannot sustain it. Man's happiness is not in them, but in the use which he makes of them, and the sustaining vitality of his being is that which springs up within himself, that which he derives as a law of nature from God, the archetypal source of his being. The law of the Lord is therefore the only true delight of man, for the exercise of that law is the only means of rising to the conformity of life with God, whereby he may be sustained in active union with God as the source and substance of all benediction.

As Genesis began with teaching us that we were made in God's image, so the Psalter begins with teaching us that our happiness is to be found in the exercise of that likeness as God Himself reveals it to us. The Ideal Man is happy, as living true to the energy of God's eternal bliss. Whatever mars this conformity or draws away the heart to things of the dead world, mars man's true happiness.

The mind of man being a created image is incapable of recognising moral truths except as being taught and illuminated by the light of life. It must receive light from the Creator by abiding in spiritual union with Him. The Ideal Man must therefore be living in spiritual unity of Life with God. Adam fell away from this, and became

blind and dead to spiritual things. Hence it was that misery overspread the world, coming along with sin. The Ideal Man has this Spirit of life within Himself. This Ideal Man can be none other than Messiah. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and those are happy who are restored to this life so as to walk perfectly in the way by the renewing power of His grace.

This power is not a transient glow of satisfaction. It is a power which sustains and develops the nature with eternity of joy. The Ideal Man is therefore like a tree that bringeth forth its fruit and does not wither. "Righteousness is immortal." As it lifts us up into the fellowship of God, so it lifts us up into the eternity and expansiveness of God's Life.

As by meditation we drink into ourselves the life of God, so our outer life must testify to this Divine fellowship. God worketh within us if we are living as His children. The moral teaching of the Psalter is not a lifeless code of external requirements, too lofty for us to carry out in practice. It is a spiritual power of Divine correspondence elevating the life more and more in the experience and exhibition of its Divine origin.

The Ideal Man is not one whose lofty perfections dishearten us because they are unattainable. He is a real principle of life, and in His life we have to live, so as to be worthy of God. Otherwise we are not worthy to sing the praise of God.

The heathen moralist may teach us what we ought to be. This Psalm teaches us what we can be, for we are created anew in Christ Jesus.

It teaches us also what we have to be. The happiness here spoken of is not a high aim which the few may seek, and even they can only seek in vain. It is the law of life by which we are hereafter to be judged. All men

have to be judged. Therefore they who have not sought happiness here in the law of the Lord, cannot receive happiness hereafter from the Lord. The happiness of eternity is the development of a practical growth perfected on earth. Without this we cannot have the capacity of the joy hereafter. "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous," and they know the Lord. This knowledge consists in love, whereby we become conformed to Him. "He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love" (1 John iv. 8). For this love man was created. By this love man must be perfected. In this love man must be beatified.

PSALM 2.

THE SON OF GOD

THE Ideal Man represented in Psalm 1. can be none other than the Son of God. "He has life in Himself." He is not dependent upon outward things. He has that inherent self-sufficiency which the Greek philosopher includes as essential to his definition of happiness.

This Divine Sonship, thus necessary to the perfection of mankind, is asserted in Psalm 2. And the acknowledgement of it is imposed by Divine decree as an obligation upon all mankind, for all must come to Him that they may have life. The reason is evident. None can attain to the Ideality of Man unless they have the Reality of the Divine Sonship. He who is the only Son of God is the only Mediator who can give this life.

It is a philosophic truth as well as a Christian maxim that all created possessions are mere vanity. The Psalm begins with warning against the desire of earthly possessions. What is addressed to kings is equally addressed to all classes of men. They seek their enjoyment in

earthly things, and these must prove at last to be only vanity. They have no substantive life, and therefore they cannot nourish man's life.

The Psalmist asks why men are thus misguided.

The question is both a dramatic utterance of prophetic indignation against the crowning act of rebellion, whereby Herod and Pontius Pilate, and the people of the Jews set the Son of Man aside when He appeared; and also it is a question of moral consideration as to the conduct of men from age to age in seeking worldly objects instead of the security of Divine faith.

Men in their ignorance think that the law of God's Covenant is a hindrance unnecessarily imposed, and so they give themselves up to their own self-will. They think that the requirements of revealed religion interfere with their freedom, and do not perceive that by the law of their nature, created in God's Image to live with His Life, they can have no freedom unless the Divine Life be communicated to them through a Human Headship, so as to liberate them from the bondage of a life dependent upon deceitful and transient phenomena. If the Son shall make you free, then are ye free indeed; but he who is the servant of this sinful world has no real freedom, for his life has no permanence. "The servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth ever" (John viii. 3).

This Psalm therefore lays down the great principle of Mediation as necessary to eternal life. The record of the Gospel is in conformity with the decree recorded in the Psalm: "God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, but he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John v. 12).

We cannot ascribe this Psalm with certainty to any period of David's life. The capture of Zion (2 Sam. v. 7),

when David was anointed after reigning seven years and six months in Hebron, the victory over Hadadezer (2 Sam. viii. 10), the subsequent defeat of the united forces of Ammon and Syria (2 Sam. x. 6), are all suggested. Others put the Psalm later than David, ascribing it to Uzziah [so Meier], or Hezekiah [so Mauser], but with no reason whatever, and in defiance of all natural fitness.

The occasion, however, is an accident of little moment.

The Divine purpose is the spiritual reality. It is not a laureate's ode applied subsequently by Evangelists to Messiah. It is a Messianic hymn, inspired by the Holy Ghost, and like all other utterances that have their final completeness in the Life of Christ, it has its moral application all along amidst the various spiritual experiences of mankind. The necessity of a Divine Mediator to satisfy the conditions of man's ideal happiness is a philosophic truth underlying all adequate conception of humanity. The Christian religion supplies this necessity. No other religion pretends to do so. The more sublime may be the calls of any religion, the more do they serve to expose the hopelessness of man's condition by nature. The noblest words can never raise man out of himself, although they may raise up hopes which can only end in disappointment. "Breath of breaths, all is evanescent breath" that has its origin in this world "under the sun" (Eccles. i. 2, 3). Its hollow whisper tells of a substance which is no more. The creature is fallen away from God and is become emptiness. All is mere breath, having no body of sound, for the Creator speaks not therein. All words of earth-born thought and human promise fail to help the soul which rests in them, all, save "the Word which was in the beginning with God, and was God, who has become flesh, so that to as many as receive Him He has given power

to become the sons of God, believing in His name." All else is "emptiness" (Ps. 2. 1).

The indignation expressed against the kings of the earth because they reject the substantial reality of the Kingdom of Heaven, and rejoice in the emptiness of earth, belongs to all kings of thought as well as kings of state. "Man by wisdom knew not God." The dreams of popular ambitions, the spacious visions of philanthropy which move the multitude, are all the mere expression in various ages of that "emptiness" which the people meditate, leading them to reject the true joy which the Lord's Anointed alone can give, the unfailing truth of the Kingdom of Grace.

This Psalm therefore teaches us that man cannot attain to his ideal perfection, and its inherent happiness by any sporadic effort. This can only be accomplished by entering into the kingdom of new life which God has sent His Son to establish upon earth. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God" (John iii. 3). The organisation of the new Kingdom is no artificial structure. It possesses a Divine vitality. The King does not belong to a succession of monarchs that pass away. He is the Eternal Son, "full of grace and truth, and of His fulness have all we received."

The necessity of this new life is world-wide, and therefore the kingdom of grace must be world-wide also. It is as necessary for one nation as for another. Messiah does not come to establish a new form of lifeless technicality, such as Mosaism had presented. Having the life of God, He makes that life to spread with beneficent renovation throughout all nations of the earth. The sacramental ordinances of the Christian Creed constitute a dispensation in which the life-giving Spirit is ministered from Him whom God has given to be Head

over all things to the Church, which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

There is no refuge to be found in anything outside of this kingdom. It dashes in pieces all the pretences of earth-born imagination as iron falling upon crockery. No beauty which may make anything to be prized amongst men, will await to enable any earthly object to escape the shattering. It is the Truth which crushes the deceptive. It is the Substantial which makes the timid vaunt of empty pride collapse. Nothing is spared because of what it was. Nothing lives save that which, being incorporated into the new kingdom, lives with the life of God.

We must therefore take refuge in the life of Christ ere that kingdom come in its final manifestation of power, calcining the limestone, crushing the sand-heaps, melting the snowdrifts, behind which we have thought to shelter ourselves. He that lives not with the supernatural life of the Incarnate Son must perish when this Kingdom shall appear.

The King's watchword is: "He that gathereth not with Me scattereth." We must take refuge with Him in the dispensation of grace. Otherwise we must feel the fullness of His wrath in the day when all earthly things shall be dissolved. As in Him is the consummation of man's happiness, for He is the source, the pattern, and the reward of the true life in which man was formed to live, so His Presence is the terror, the torment, of those who are outside of Him. His Presence makes them feel the emptiness of that to which they have looked.

The true of necessity destroys the deceitful. To our created perceptions, truth and falsehood appear only as abstractions, but as eternal objects they cannot be without personality, for personality is the supreme form of existence, whether it be the true, the Divine Personality,

or the false, the fallen, the empty, the rebellious, the diabolic personality. We as men can only judge according to truth as a law of thought. The judgement of God is according to truth as a power of life. Our will may be opposed to what we know to be the truth, and we may form regretful judgments when we love that which for its falsehood is unworthy of our love, and we see that it must perish in presence of the Truth. We would sooner that it should cease to be, than that it should thus suffer continual rebuke by such antagonism. But there is nothing really existent which is not active. Abstractions are the unreal formularies through which our minds investigate and describe what is active and personal. Personality is supreme, and what is not personally apprehended has no existence. Truth, therefore, proceeds from God. God is Truth. He does not take His place as the representative or embodiment of Truth. Truth is His being. It is His Person. It is His Will. He does not choose between two alternatives as we do. He acts according to His own supreme omnipotence. His Will is the Law of His creatures. His creatures are true in proportion to the manifestation of His Truth in them.

"He knoweth the way of the righteous," not by external observation, but by essential, authoritative determination. They are what He has made them to be. So the true man abiding in correspondence with this Divine knowledge finds his joy therein. "He knows as he is known" The Divine knowledge is the Divine Love.

"The way of the ungodly perisheth," because it is not what God knows. That is to say, not merely is it something outside of Divine intention, which has come up, no one can tell whence or how. It is the antagonist of the Divine intention, the Divine Truth, the Divine Will.

God cannot regard it with indifference. God's essence is activity, goodness, love. He must, therefore, have an active relationship to what is outside of His intentions. Consequently His relationship to the deceitful is the action of repudiated love. It is wrath and hatred. Wrath expresses the personal outrage of which He is sensible, inasmuch as He had a personal claim to the homage and obedience of His creatures. Hatred expresses His consciousness of evil necessarily inherent in all which does not exist according to the law which He gave it, for that law was the law of goodness, truth, and joy. God does not suffer in His own Essence by the sin, but His work, His intention, suffers. It is the sinner himself who suffers; for God had created him to rejoice in holiness.

Thus does the eternal solidity of truth stand in contrast to the eternal emptiness of that which is at variance with it, and the personal supremacy of Truth necessitates a personal hatred of that which is opposed to it.

In the limited sphere of our created life, judgements have to be held in check by the inadequacy of our apprehensions. We can never form a real estimate of anything. Indeed within our human sphere of experience, good and evil are always so much mixed up that we never see anything which claims love absolute and pure. Such love is due from us to God alone. Neither do we see anything that deserves to be absolutely hated.

Such hatred belongs to the Satanic powers which are hidden from our sight. We cannot even conceive of the absolutely evil, the absolutely hateful. The worst realities of existence appear before us veiled by the exterior of the created form which God gave them, however much it may have been marred by evil. That form deserves respect at our hands, whatever the evil may be with which it is associated. The evil which we

hate, and similarly the good wherein we delight, are abstractions separable in our minds from the animal or personal individuality of their concrete exhibition.

God, on the contrary, knows the good as being what He intended, and the evil as having marred His work. He does not regard them as abstractions. To Him personality is no neutral form. He regards nothing as being evil save the personality which, whether primarily or subordinately, originates evil. That personality is evil because it fails to correspond with the activity for which He created it. The Devil abode not in the Truth, but is the father of all falsehood (John viii. 44). He set Himself up as the antagonist to the Word of God. Those who accept the falsehood become the children of the devil. Whatever their conduct may be, his personality absorbs into his own hatefulness those who reject God's word of truth.

It is therefore no violation of love, but the exercise of love, which makes God hate evil with an eternal hatred. He must hate the personality which upholds the evil, for the evil is in the personality, not in its surroundings. If He did not hate this personal evil He would be unfaithful towards the goodness which springs up from His own personality to be the light of the world. That light would be darkened, that happiness would be clouded, if the love of the Creator could so swerve from active fidelity to goodness and truth as to ignore, condone, or tolerate the evil.

The existence of the evil which God hates alongside of the Divine omnipotence is a mystery which we cannot understand, any more than we can understand the co-existence of the finite and the infinite. The difficulty is the same in the moral sphere as it is in the material. In truth we cannot conceive the infinite at all, although we can perceive the necessity of its existence. We can,

however, perceive that in a world constituted as is the world of which we have experience, the existence of evil was inevitable, unless the noblest exercise of created will were to be withdrawn. Unless necessity were to supersede love, the free-will of the creature must be left to the possibility of wrecking itself through unlove. Worlds might be formed in which such mishap was impossible. Probably we may say that many such worlds do exist within the manifold universe which God created. But those worlds could not have the dignity which belongs to our moral nature, or to the angel host who share with us in some degree of the Divine Sonship. Love was essential. Love must be free. Sin therefore must be a possibility. God shows His love to the world which He has created by sending His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. But if He is to welcome the souls that correspond with His Love, He must still leave the penalties of His wrath to overwhelm those who will not die to the sinful world in order to accept the gift of life.

So then God in His love provides the way, but we must "Kiss the Son,"—do homage to the Mediatorial Sovereign, who brings truth and life to restore us. Otherwise we must "perish from the way."

This Psalm opens the Psalter with a proclamation of God's love and a denunciation of God's wrath against those who reject it. This dark outline accompanies every detail of the Psalmist's subsequent utterances. It comes up to fullest manifestation in the Comminatory Psalms. The reason is, that the bright tracery of heavenly hope lies upon the dark surface of man's sin. The brightness of the Divine love makes but more intense the darkness of human unlove which it has to meet. God's mercy is not impaired by the declaration of His wrath, but if the awful reality of that wrath were

withdrawn, the bright truth of God's Love would fade away into a twilight of moral indifference.

This Psalm prepares us for the Psalter as St John's words prepare us for His narrative of our Lord's ministry. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His Hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 35-36).

THE FIRST QUINDECAD

CHRIST IN HIMSELF AND IN HIS CHURCH

Ps. 3. is the first Psalm with a title, and Ps. 18. marks a very definite point in the progress of the Psalter by the unusual length and detail of its title. We may therefore take these fifteen Psalms as constituting a special section, and it will be seen that they have a distinct completeness, beginning with the entry of Christ upon His earthly struggle, and leading onwards to the awakening of the saints in the likeness of His heavenly glory.

There seems indeed to be a marked subdivision into two Heptads which are separated from one another by an anonymous Psalm, and each Heptad is subdivided: the first by Ps. 6., which is a penitential Psalm, and is marked in the Psalter by Sheminith "to be sung an octave below"; the second by Ps. 14., which may be called specially the Psalm of David, for, in Hebrew, David = 14. It will be seen elsewhere that the Psalter is divided into nine Fourteens and one Twenty-four, *i.e.* ten times the mystical number of David, for, according to another spelling, David = 24.

Thus we seem to get the ordinary law of the

Quindecad. The close of it is marked by Ps. 17. being "A Prayer."

We may call these Heptads in accordance with their subjects:

I.—THE SOLITARY STRUGGLER

1. Trilogy of the Sacrifice of Righteousness (Pss. 3.-5.).
The Sin-Bearer (Ps. 6.).
2. Trilogy of the World Beyond (Pss. 7.-9.).
An anonymous Psalm (Ps. 10.).

II.—THE DISCIPLINE OF GRACE

1. Trilogy of the Church in Worldly Weakness (Pss. 11.-13.).
God seeking a Man after His own Mind (Ps. 14.).
2. Trilogy of the Divine likeness (Pss. 15.-17.).

Trilogy of the Sacrifice of Righteousness

1. The Entrance upon the Struggle (Ps. 3.).
2. The Peaceful Death of Him that is set apart as the Acceptable Sacrifice (Ps. 4.).
3. The Daily Morning Sacrifice (Ps. 5.).

PSALM 3.

THE ENTRANCE UPON THE STRUGGLE

DAVID utters his morning song of faith when everything seems to be against him. His foes are increased. The people increased continually with Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 12). Deep was his sorrow for his son. Deep was his sorrow, for he knew that this rebellion was a chastisement to himself for his sin. But equally unswerving was his faith. He knew that the kingdom was sure by Divine promise to Solomon. Absalom's proclamation at Hebron could not set aside the promise to the King upon the Holy Hill of Zion.

Nevertheless we ought always to remember that Absalom was David's favourite son. The appointment of Solomon was by God, and must of itself have involved a sacrifice of David's will. Satan, his enemy, had captured the child of his natural love. He had to accept this judgement of God which turned human affection into such deep anguish. He had to accept Solomon as the prophetic heir of the promises, and the death of Bath-sheba's sin-born child was a penalty preceding the gift of Solomon. Absalom was rejected of God, and David had to bear his rejection of God under the form of rebellion against his own fatherly tenderness. How great must have been his grief to find the special object of his affections stirring up the rebellion against him! He calls the rebel host of "his enemies" an "ungodly" multitude. They were not only outraging his claims. They were wickedly setting themselves up against God's will. Possibly there may have been some religious pretence in this movement, if Absalom's hair may be taken as implying a Nazarite's vow.

Our struggle is like that of David. Our original sin has multiplied its power. It has developed into many habits of sin. Evil spirits, while they tempt us, cry out that "Jesus cannot help us." The natural heart is too prone to sink down despondently.

If we would make the Psalter a law of our own lives, we must never allow despondency to give strength to temptation. This Psalm calls us to faith at the outset of our struggle. "He who hath suffered being tempted is able to succour us when we are tempted." We must cry aloud in the power of the Holy Ghost, looking to Jesus as our glorious Head. The Father will give us whatever we thus ask in His Son's name. The answer comes to us "from the Holy Mount." It is what we can claim as belonging to the heavenly Kingdom.

It will not unfrequently happen that the Absalom of our most cherished hopes becomes the besetting principle of evil which gives strength to our temptations and demands our greatest self-sacrifice.

The first half of the Psalm is an utterance of faith. The last half sets forth the blessedness of the Psalmist's experience. His hope of the future is as an accomplished fact by reason of Jehovah's promise. The threefold appeal to Jehovah in each half of the Psalm is an intimation of the Blessed Trinity.

We must lie down and sleep, not in recklessness, but in faith. If we are doing God's will, we may always be sure of God's protection. But there must be as much exercise of faith in the repose of retirement as in the stir of battle. Our hope must be worthy of God. It must not be limited to earthly expectation. We must be ready, like the Psalmist, to lie down upon the cross and sleep in death, if we have a confidence in God's protection which is worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The struggle of faith will always be a solitary one. We cannot take the adhesion of many followers as a token of God's protection. We are not to be afraid though there be "myriads of people" against us. Our struggle in the world is a struggle of Divine witness against the world. The "awaking" in the resurrection will vindicate us, and we must look to nothing short of that. We lose earthly things by looking for them, whereas, if we would look simply for heavenly things, earthly things would be given. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all 'other' things shall be added unto you" (Matt. vi. 33).

The soul that trusts in God will recount with joy many a victory over temptation. We must anticipate the victory to be revealed by and by. "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John v. 4).

God smites our enemies on the cheekbone, even when we, in our sluggishness and unbelief, suffer them to prevail against us. Our defeat cannot arise from God's unfaithfulness, but from our own unbelief. We must neither give way through despondency, nor through presumption. God's triumph on our behalf must stimulate us to struggle, not lull us into negligence. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John xvi. 33).

Salvation is the Lord's work. Salvation is the Lord's life. We can only have salvation by living in Him and acting in His power.

We must "offer ourselves a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ," if we would have the blessing of the Covenant (Rom. xii. 1). The whole purpose of our earthly life is that we should be a sacrifice acceptable with the righteousness of Him whose struggle we are called to share. So shall God's covenanted Blessing rest upon us.

PSALM 4.

THE PEACEFUL DEATH OF HIM WHO IS SET APART AS THE ACCEPTABLE SACRIFICE

THIS Psalm is the pendant of the foregoing. David's hot-spirited companions are angered, as the closing day only brings them fresh tidings of the enemy's increasing power. David bids them trust. Their worldliness, relying upon the display of this world's emptiness, is a greater dishonour to him than the hostile forces which threaten. To yield to such unworthy fears is to set aside His "glory," the security of God's promise.

God has watched over him in time past, and will watch over him still.

Why has God watched over him? It is because he was faithful to the Lord. "The Lord hath chosen the saint, the man of love." To fear is to sin, for it is repudiating God's covenanted love. Whatever earthly excitement there may be, we must never admit of such anger or such fear as to distrust God's promise. No one who was fearful was to follow the hosts of Israel to battle (Deut. xx. 3). So no one was to take part with David who was fearful. Fearfulness expresses a wrong relation of mind to God, and anger a wrong relation to man. One involves the other. Both imply want of faith, as if when God lets our opponents gain a superiority over us, we should distrust His help. "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" (Matt. viii. 26). In the preceding Psalm David had said that he would "lie down and sleep." The bad news of the day does not shake him, for he trusts in God. He bids the sons of Zeruiah hush their natural pride and lie down in peace. They are to tranquillise themselves by utterances of faith in God. But they must altogether abstain from angry, fretful complaint. "Speak to God and be silent!" Silence towards man is the best mode of speaking to God.

They must offer to God "sacrifices of righteousness," not looking for God to show great signs after which they would praise Him, but remembering that He expects great acts of faith from them, so that He may afterwards acknowledge them among His saints as He already had acknowledged David. In such sacrifice of self with living faith, they were following the steps of Abraham, and God, who accepted the Patriarch's faith, would accept theirs. The sacrifice of righteousness, offered in faith, looks beyond the grave, and knows that God has power to raise up from the dead. Without this righteousness of faith we cannot have our share in the life which is to

be obtained by sacrifice. Those worshippers do but insult God who think that they can rouse Him by tentative carnal sacrifices, as if He needed the bribe, instead of giving to Him the righteous sacrifice of a faithful heart because He requires their love.

So must we in all the difficulties of life gather round the Cross of Christ, not thinking to obtain some immediate outward answer, but taking up our cross and following Christ, following Him to death, and through death to that life beyond the grave, where all righteous sacrifices shall have an abundant reward.

Jesus calls us to celebrate His sacrifice in Holy Eucharist with perfect reliance upon His merits, as David called upon the sons of Zeruiah to rest trustfully in God's promises, whereby God had separated David in a special covenant of love to Himself. Men do but dishonour Christ and weaken His cause if they do not trust in the Lord, with full confidence that He will make all things work together for good to His Church at large and to His people individually.

Alas, that Christian people should be so ready to murmur when things go wrong! No sacrifices that we can bring into the sanctuary can avail for good, if we do not bring the sacrifices of righteousness in our daily life, by living to God with faith because "all the promises of God in Christ are yea, and in Him, Amen, to the glory of God by us" (2 Cor. i. 20).

The world cry out that our profession of religion does not bring us any good. It is the outcry which we hear in the present day. Society none the better for religion! People who do not profess Christianity just as good as those who do! No social difficulties removed!

In this Psalm we look away from outward failure. Failures are permitted for the trial of our faith. Why do we fail? It is because we do not look up with loving

hearts to God. "Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us!" Outward prosperity avails nothing without that inward light of life. Where that light shines within, the vexations of the world are put to rest. That light is a living joy which no harvests of earthly abundance can equal. It has a sense of security which nothing else can give. It shines through all darkness. It is itself imperishable. Darkness of sorrow, death itself, destroys not this light. It is the only security which the soul can have, and the soul which thus rests in God is well content to be alone with God. Alone with God in life! Alone in death! So was David. So much more was the Only-Begotten Son. He could say, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit." No created being could enter into the sanctuary of that solitude. We are called similarly to live, to die, to rest, to rejoice in individual fellowship with Him, separated from the world in the solitude of that love wherewith the Father loveth His Only Begotten, the fellowship of covenanted love which belongs to us as His members. We know that "nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. viii. 30).

PSALM 5.

THE DAILY MORNING SACRIFICE

THE sacrifice of righteousness is the oblation of a life peacefully dying to the world, in the joyous consciousness of the holy welcome which undying love provides. The sacrifices of the law showed forth to the carnal Israelites the penalty of sin, for there was no welcome awaiting them. They perished in death. Their death showed that God did not accept them. They testified of man's sin, although they pointed onward to a Sacrifice

wherein God would take pleasure. True Sacrifice must indeed be offered by dying to the world, but as it ascends with the inspiration of Divine Love, and is lost to earth in the Fire of the Holy Ghost which bears it up to God, it does not perish in death, but rises to live in the loving welcome of Divine acceptance. The Body of Christ is thus in Holy Eucharist the perpetual living food of those who offer it.

We do not think adequately of the Sacrifice of Christ, if we merely think of Him as dying for our sins. As His oblation is the Sacrifice of Righteousness, its perfection consists in His presentation of Himself alive from the dead to be the object wherein God delights, the triumphant response of Creation to the Father's Voice, worthy to be His delight, because it is uttered in the Filial Life and Power of His Consubstantial Word. That Word by whom all things were created is the power whereby all creation is presented to the Father as having accomplished the purpose of His Eternal Will. Creation had been an empty dream unless the Word by whom all things were created had been made flesh, so as to present it to the Father in the dignity of Divine Life. Now the Father beholds the Sacrifice of His Incarnate Son with infinite delight as an oblation which He can take unto Himself, and He pours forth in eternal fulness the spiritual treasures of His self-communicating Love as the response of His Fatherly joy.

Ps. 5. is the Psalm of the morning Sacrifice following the day of warfare and the night of repose. It is the anticipation of the great Oblation of the Resurrection Morning. The two previous Psalms had probably been composed when David was far away. Now he is approaching the Temple of God. He is the Beloved. The Father delights to welcome him and those whom he brings. So Christ calls us to share His heavenly

Oblation of Himself to the Father, as we have shared His struggle. He is our Righteousness.

We can offer the Sacrifice of Righteousness if we have learned to accept the Cross. This oblation cannot be offered by those whose hearts are alive to the world. It is only as having passed into the new life of the Resurrection that we can feed upon His glorious risen Body; and it is only by feeding upon His Body in the new Life wherein He is now presenting Himself to the Father, that we can present Him as our Sacrifice. We cannot appropriate the merits of the earthly, the evening Sacrifice of Calvary, unless by sharing therein we are dead to the world. Then, but only then, His risen Body whereon we feed, and wherein we live, shall fill us with the sweet satisfaction of union with God. So must we offer the Sacrifice of Righteousness in the blessed experience of faith.

The murmured, meditative prayer of a nature still belonging to earth implies that "we know not yet what we should pray for as we ought" (Rom. viii. 26). It tells of the "unworthiness and blindness" of our nature. But we come before God, longing for God, and "the Spirit maketh intercession for us," even the Spirit of Christ, so that the all-comprehensive merits of Christ plead within us with Divine power while we "look up" as being accepted in the Beloved to receive those gifts wherein Christ who is our Oblation and our Life may best be glorified.

No boast of our own can obtain an answer from God. "The sacrifice which we order" before God, is our only claim for acceptance, but we know that "whatever we ask in His Name, the Father will give to us." We cannot offer this Sacrifice of Righteousness if we have pleasure in this evil world. By nature we are shut off from God, "condemned already." "Blood and deceit"

are the power of the world, violence and falsehood. God will accept none who come to Him with worldly pretences. Success in this world is secured by ways of sin. These "God abhors." The Psalmist's only confidence is "in the multitude of God's mercy." Thus it is that we can claim to belong to "God's House," entering therein as His children by faith in Christ.

The "unrighteous mammon" never can avail to constitute our righteousness before God because we have possessed it; but it is a sore hindrance to our attaining the "true riches." We little know how great is the taint of sin which infects all that the world calls great. We must make to ourselves friends in the Communion of saints by becoming sharers in that poverty of spirit which is the only title to the kingdom of Heaven. They will welcome us in God's Name, if we have "worshipped in His fear towards His Holy Temple." Earthly gifts do not of themselves adorn a Christian life, although they endanger it. The more we have upon the earth, the more we have to die to, ere we can enter into that Holy Temple which must be our only object of desire.

We need to be "led" by the Spirit of God in the way of righteousness, if we would offer the sacrifice of righteousness. Many enemies are keenly watching us to make us stumble. He who is a liar from the beginning seeks to destroy us thereby. He besets our path with pits that yawn for our destruction, the plausible maxims of the world.

"Declare them guilty." It is the Psalmist's first appeal for the destruction of his enemies. But it is not the appeal of malice. The guilt is theirs already. The judgement, the punishment, are but the manifestation of the truth. Messiah's Kingdom cannot come until everything that opposeth itself shall be cast down. "The promise of His coming" and "the Day of Judgement,"

and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Pet. iii. 7, 10) must be together. The manifestation of the guilt of the ungodly is but the purging out of their wickedness, so that creation may no longer be defiled. The punishment invoked against them is not an external vengeance that might be withheld, but it is the recoil upon themselves of their own malice, which, if not thus recoiling on them, must go on working the downfall of the innocent. So here he says, "Let them fall by their own counsels." Those plots are ever working danger for others, but if the ungodly reap the full consequence of their deeds, those who trust in Messiah shall find the protection of His kingdom, as was promised in Ps. 2. God's favour will rest upon the earth, and the righteous will inherit a blessing.

The punishment is but the return of man's evil deeds upon himself. The Blessing is an act of God unmerited by man, the outpouring of God's love upon His people whom He has saved" (Ps. 3. 9), the Shield (*θυρεός*) of faith so that no power shall be able to harm them. All that is within that protection is holy. All that is outside of it is accursed.

PSALM 6.

THE SIN-BEARER

HE who offers the Sacrifice of Righteousness in which we are called to join is Himself the Sin-Bearer, bearing the burden of our sins.

This Psalm, the first of the Penitential Psalms, seems to stand alone between two Trilogies. The sacrifice, the act of communion with God, whereby man looked up to his Father in Heaven, should have been an act of simple joy. So it remains in its true Divine character, but outwardly it must be to us an act of suffering, for sin

pervades all earth-born existences. Sin was driven from the Flesh of Christ by the power of the Holy Ghost dwelling in Him, but His Flesh had to bear the struggle as the Evil One sought to hold Him under his dominion. There was in Him the substance of humanity but not the seminal transmission of evil since He was born of a virgin. His sacrifice consisted in the brave endurance of all that the Prince of this world, wherein He was Incarnate, could do while he sought to make Him disloyal to His Father.

We must suffer in our struggle with sin. Sin is not merely incident to our will, leaving our bodies as a neutral form of mechanism wherein our souls reside. Our body needs to be raised out of the dominion of sin as our Lord's Body, from the first moment of His conception, was pure from the taint of sin by the power of the Holy Ghost. Unless we are rising up to God with humble penitence as sinners, we cannot join along with our Great Sin-Bearer in offering to God the Sacrifice of Righteousness which He has provided.

Sacrifice therefore becomes an act of suffering by reason of Satan's external power over us. Suffering also becomes an act of sacrifice by virtue of Christ's communicated righteousness, enabling us to endure that violence.

We invoke the Father not to cast us off "in wrath" when He has shown His love to mankind by sending His Son that we may have eternal life.

We invoke God the Son to be "gracious" unto us, for our humanity must sink under God's discipline in its own weakness unless strengthened by union with Him.

We invoke God the Holy Ghost to spread His "healing" vitality through our sinful nature. "Our bones," the very stay of our natural fabric, are vexed. They

need the vital energy which the co-operative Spirit gives.

Thus this Psalm corresponds exactly with the Apostolic prayer, "The Love of God, the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost."

The "soul," as the seat of personality, is also vexed.

We look up to the Personal God as we feel our weakness. "Lord, how long?"

Our sin has driven God away from us. We ask God to "return and deliver our soul." The removal of sin which the penitent desires is not the mere removal of penalty, but the restoration of Divine Life. Without Divine Life man cannot be what God meant him to be. He has a spiritual nature which ought to be the life of his soul, but his soul died when Adam sinned, and the beginning of the restoration was not until Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost. Individually, God returns to us when He regenerates us in Baptism.

The Psalmist feels that his whole malady consists in God's absence from his soul. But that absence of God's Spirit does not arise from want of love. "In wrath God remembers mercy." In His mercy He will "send Jesus the Saviour."

If we come not to Jesus we must die in our sins (John viii. 24). We may be also quite sure that if God give not to any the opportunity of coming to Jesus, it is because He knows their moral condition to be such that they would not come, if Jesus came to them. In mercy God sends, and in mercy He withholds. The soul that longs for salvation will not be neglected.

But we must ask God to deliver our soul while it is in the body and is capable of raising the life of the body to a standard of holiness; for when the soul has left the body, the coming of Jesus would be of no avail. "In death there can be no remembrance of God." The body

is the necessary instrument of the soul's moral action. "Who will give Thee thanks in the pit?" In death none can do what is pleasing to God by any remembrance of His commands. But, he continues, can there be any in the pit that are secured against death? The changed turn of the phrase seems to be necessitated by the prophetic anticipation of Jesus, descending into Sheol to bring forth thence the prisoners of hope. Great is the silence of the grave: but the voice of Jesus there shall waken the sound of thankfulness!

The Psalmist wept all night at the thought of his sin. We must take care and remember that God looks for equal penitence from ourselves if we would invite the Saviour's presence. We must take care that the recitation of the Psalmist's words does not turn to our condemnation by reason of the feebleness of our sorrow. Do we feel our need that God should return to us? Do we know how much our sins have driven Him away? Do we look for any great change to take place in ourselves according to the measure in which He returns and delivers our soul?

Do we look for God's return with tears of penitence? or do we look upon the things of the world with carnal desire? We cannot do both.

If we would invite God "we must indeed hate all that is round about us in the world, yea, and our own life also" (Luke xiv. 26). Penitence involves the separation.

"Away from me all ye that work vanity."

We must put away all worldly maxims, if we would welcome God returning to the heart. We cannot serve God and Mammon. But great is the joy when we truly welcome God. The Triune God invoked at the beginning is now glorified at the end.

By the return of God the soul is lifted up into the Being of God. The world, the flesh, and the devil, are

put to rout. He who bore the shame of his sin in earnest penitence rises to the glory of Jesus the Saviour, and his enemies that mocked him are turned back in dismay.

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Trilogy of the World Beyond

1. Conquest of Satan by the Descent into Hell (Ps. 7.).
2. Coronation of Manhood in Christ (Ps. 8.).
3. God coming in Judgement to deliver His People (Ps. 9.).

PSALM 7.

CONQUEST OF SATAN BY THE DESCENT INTO
HELL

In the preceding Psalm the penitent was in his bondage wailing by reason of the corruption of nature. Now he is seen looking to take refuge with God. He looks to the rock whence he was hewn, and the hole of the pit whence he has been digged (Isa. li. 1). The grave of Christ is the refuge of the sufferer, the birthplace of the regenerate.

The Psalm belongs Messianically to the Descent into Hell, which was typified by David's flight from Jerusalem when Cush, the Benjamite, cursed him; that is doubtless another name for Shimei.

Saul represents human nature in the self-satisfaction of its own natural ideal. Absalom represents the much-loved people who rejected Christ, their true Father, *not* knowing the things which belonged to their peace; Cush, the Ethiopian, represents the fallen nature of man resenting the call to faith and holiness whereby the Incarnate Word exhibited the condition of the human race as worthy of death.

Saul's tribesman exulted in Judah's rebellion. The natural heart exults in Christian apostasy. Satan is the

lion-king of the world, as Christ is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, who will return from the grave and claim the kingdom for His own.

We must take refuge in His grave, as in the parable the sheep pass through the door of the self-sacrificed Shepherd in order to escape from the wolf.

The people of Christ who die to the world with Christ have always to bear the reproach of philanthropy, and yet all efforts for the world's benefit have the Christian Church for their source. Love to man, yea, love to enemies, is the true test of Christian life. Christ must know us not to be wanting therein if He is to claim us as partakers of His own grace. Sin against our neighbour, want of love, is an "enemy which will pursue" us into another world and destroy any boast of spiritual life.

Amidst a world that is ever misjudging us we must be looking forward to the coming of Christ, when He shall return with all His Saints, manifested with heavenly triumph for judgement.

Look to the final judgement and live so that thou mayst be established therein. Then shall no Shimei cry out against Christ and His people. The discipline of earth is ordained so that the hearts of the faithful *may* be tried, but all the while God is protecting them. David was true-hearted, waiting, during all the lifetime of Saul, until God should avenge him, but he knew that the judgement was coming. So now we know that all who persecute the Church shall be judged in that great day: Shimei was to perish in the time of Solomon's kingdom although David spared his life. This Psalm seems to point to the final destructions of all naturalistic unbelief in the kingdom of the Great Solomon, although Christ tolerates it during the period of the Church militant. "If any do not turn." The present dispensation gives opportunity for the unbelievers to

turn. The Day of Judgement will give none. They whose hearts are in this world are bringing forth a lie. Though they may dwell in Jerusalem by outward acceptance of the Christian faith, yet they will be looking to Achish in the city of the Great Giant. The servants of Shimei fled there, and Shimei went after them. His heart was not whole with Solomon as King at Jerusalem.

"The Lord most high" suitably ends the Psalm which speaks of Christ being elevated from the grave and returning from Heaven in the manifestation of the final judgement. We must always be lifting up our hearts to Him, abiding in His grace, and watching for Him to come again in glory.

The flight of David could not alienate the throne which God had promised him. Shimei's curses must recoil upon the speaker. So is it now. We need fear no evil in carrying out the work of God. God shall reward His people the more fully for all the evil that the ungodly world may speak against them.

PSALM 8.

THE CORONATION OF MANHOOD IN CHRIST

WITH Ps. 8 we welcome Christ to His heavenly throne. We praise God for exalting Him as our Head. The Church Catholic, "in all the earth," exults in the glory which belongs to Him "above the heavens."

Man's weakness does not mar the glory. As natural life begins with infinitesimal germs, so the heavenly Jerusalem is a living growth, and therefore it attains its strength not by incorporating the great powers of the earth, but by gathering children unto itself. Even if the wise and the mighty come to Baptism, they must become as little children, must be born again. So

we have to feel our own weakness while looking forward to the Divine manifestation. We must meet the pride of the world in the hidden power of a new life. "God giveth grace to the humble."

This is a Psalm of the night season, and therefore "moon and stars" are mentioned, but not the orb of day. The Psalmist recognises life in this world as night. He knows of a day that is coming. In that day Messiah shall shine forth and all His people shall be absorbed with joy in the participation of His glory. All the galaxy that night reveals to us is, as it were, only the floor of that infinite glory wherein man is to be exalted. How sacred and mysterious a treasure is that nature of man which is to be elevated to so great a dignity. The things of earth are all ordained to minister to man, and we are to attain to the Divine glory when we come to the fulness of stature. Even the monsters of the deep, though they elude us for a while, have a mysterious future in which man shall be supreme. The whole universe is awaiting the development of that mysterious Personality which these infant forms enshrine.

We must look up as partakers of a new life in Christ, to reign with Him upon the Throne of God.

PSALM 9.

GOD COMING IN JUDGEMENT TO DELIVER HIS PEOPLE

THE Psalm of the Sin-Bearer who offers the Sacrifice of Righteousness is followed by a Trilogy of mysteries beyond the grave. The flight of David sets before us the death of Christ driven from His heavenly throne by man's sin. He whose eternal throne was prepared upon the heavenly Zion has to live like an exile in this

world of death. The predestined glory of man could not, however, be set aside, so that we see Him in Ps. 8. crowned with glory and honour at the head of a multitude upon Mount Zion. Now we have the judgement.

That coronation, however, was only to be obtained through death. Instead, therefore, of a Psalm of jubilant triumph, we have here a Psalm upon "the death of the Son." God so loved the world, that He sent His Son to die for us. Messiah became "obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, wherefore also God hath exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name" (Phil. ii. 8, 9).

This sacrifice of Christ is the means of glorification to those who come to Him. It is also the critical event, the judgement, for those who believe not in Him—a judgement beginning with the carnal Jews, and continuing to all generations. Judgement includes not merely the final judgement, but the preparatory dispensation of human probation.

Ps. 9. is an Alphabetical Psalm. This artifice of the poet symbolizes the setting in order of the moral chaos wherein humanity was fallen. It is the establishment of the Divine Kingdom upon earth which is here celebrated. The coming of the Day of the Lord, subsequently to the night season of mysterious contemplation, as set forth in Ps. 8., is the overthrow of all that is merely of earth. The first Gentile power to be destroyed is that which once *was* Jerusalem. No longer the city of God, it must perish. Its name must be blotted out. And so it came to pass.

But the end is not yet. We have to wait for the manifestation of the sons of God. The true exhibition of Christ's Kingdom is not as yet. Judgement begins at the House of God. We who are called into His Church have to be proved whether we will walk worthy of our

vocation. Whilst repeating this Psalm we must recognize ourselves as being the subjects of continuous judgement in the discipline of the Church militant. We have not to contend with the earth in order to win the earth to Christ. Christ has conquered. We have to contend in order to be proved whether we are worthy of His Kingdom.

The Church militant has to fulfil her course in the world. This will be a disappointing one. Yet it was to manifest God's power.

We must thank God for the establishment of His eternal Kingdom, that whereof Daniel prophesied, and yet widely different from what we should have expected in reading his prophecy. The eternal life was to be manifested in weakness. This corresponds with the development of manhood from the incapacity of infant life. The nations were to be subdued by the Cross, but the people of God were still to be the downtrodden.

See how this Psalm requires us to exercise not only thankfulness but patience. God lifts us up from the gates of death, but this world suffices us not. We long to be with our King upon the Holy Hill of Zion.

Worldliness overspreads the Church. The nations think to make for themselves a home on earth, but after all, it is only a prison. They are "trapped in the work of their own hands," because they would not rise up to the heavenly aspirations of Christ's Kingdom.

We appeal, therefore, for God to "arise." Nothing but His coming can heal the miseries of the Church on earth.

The Psalm is now broken off. Its subject is incomplete. It seems to indicate a renaissance of Christendom from her state of degradation, which nevertheless is not the real coming of Christ to which we looked forward.

God may indeed "arise" time after time. As we say this Psalm we must long for a revival of the Church. Each dispensation is a phase of judgement for the generation to which it occurs. We must entreat God to show Himself, but in so doing we must prepare ourselves for the judgement. How will we meet the manifestation?

PSALM 10.

EVIL TRIUMPHANT FOR A WHILE, BUT FINALLY OVERCOME

Ps. 9. is continued. The acrostic character of the Psalm is suspended for a few verses.

We may almost take the breaking of the Psalm in two as symbolizing the rupture which was to take place in the Kingdom of Christ by the separation of East and West. From that time onward, the history of the Church assumes a new character.

An evil form prefiguring Antichrist seems to dominate everything. The restoration of Divine order is hidden, although the verses are continued in such a way as to show that God's control remains.

We must see that, in denouncing the character which belongs to the oppression, we do not ourselves fall into the same ungodliness. God is far away from the oppressor's sight. We must take care that we do not recklessly bless ourselves because of our increase, or boast as if we could not be moved.

Still we must be calling on God to arise. The triumph of evil round about us is only preparing the way for His appearing. Evil will probably be wildest in its excess just at the time when God will come. He will come, as it were, to another Belshazzar's Feast, in which all the world will be keeping revel.

We have to be crying, Thy Kingdom come.
Suddenly it shall appear.

The recitation of this Psalm must not produce a slothful fatalism, but while it strengthens our faith amidst all trials, it must stimulate our prayers for the Divine deliverance. God will come, but He waits for our prayers to be more earnest.

This Psalm closes an Octave of Psalms, and forms a break in the Quindecad. It is separated from the rest by being anonymous, and yet doubtless it did originally form one Psalm with the preceding.

Trilogy of the Church in worldly weakness

1. The Feebleness of God's Chosen People (Ps. 11.).
2. The Announcement of the Incarnation (Ps. 12.).
3. The Long-continued Expectation of God's Chosen People (Ps. 13.).

PSALM 11.

THE FEEBLENESS OF GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE

THE Heptad which follows may be called "The Discipline of Grace," consisting of two parts—"The Church in worldly weakness," and, after a break, the second Trilogy of "the Divine likeness." This gives a completeness to these fifteen Psalms as chaunting one continuous and perfect song of "Christ in Himself and in His Church."

The ninth Psalm gives an account of the Day of Christ as a judgement on the world, beginning with the Fall of Jerusalem, but afterwards clouded over by worldliness. This, however, is not given as a particular prophecy, but as a prophecy which, while having a particular fulfilment, proclaims a general law of operation. We have to sing it not as being done away with because it is fulfilled, but as still finding its echo in the successive

eras of history. The tenth Psalm represents a hushed time of sadness, changing into a glorious outburst of Divine manifestation. Thus we learn not to lose heart under overthrow, but to watch for, and therefore prepare for, the end.

So Ps. 11, takes up the feebleness of God's Church in the world. Unbelievers mock. It is what we hear continually in the present day. "The social system needs some better remedy than the Church of God supplies." Thus men still speak!

We must not let our faith be shaken by such animadversions. The Church of Christ is training the people of God for a better world. It does ameliorate the condition of all men even here, but such general benefit, while testifying to the truth of Christianity, is outside of its proper scope.

Our Hill is Mount Zion. The world little knows what it is disparaging when it bids us flee thither. True, we are not strong, like the wild beasts of the field; but our Hill shall be exalted above the hills, and the high hills of earth will shake when our glorious home shines out.

The Psalm looks to the tottering of foundations, we may well believe, with special reference to the convulsions of the last days and the impotence of the Church in dealing with them. "What hath the righteous done?"

Our security is in the Divine Sovereignty. He will overrule all for good. He is watching and proving the children of men. The weakness of the Church is ordained for the trial of our faith.

The judgement of the ungodly will be sure and terrible in the end, but they who have lived here in the righteousness of *faith*, trusting in God as Abraham did, shall *see* God's Face hereafter.

PSALM 12.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE INCARNATION

WHAT a world of falsehood it is! "The man of love," as Cheyne well translates the word, has ceased. Men pride themselves on the power of the tongue.

In the midst of their boasting God says, "I will arise."

This is the first promise of the Incarnation as a power to heal the troubles of the sinful time. God waits for wickedness to reach its height. Then He will interfere. To come in judgement before the time would be a harm to the man of love.

So it was at Christ's first coming. So God times His visitations, not arbitrarily, but according to the unerring judgement wherewith He tries the children of men (Ps. 11. 4).

Men sin with idle boasts. It is the Word of God who will become Incarnate to answer their boasts. For judgement am I come into this world. Humble faith will see God in Christ. Boastful pride will perish before Him. The truth of His promises will be manifest, flowing forth as silver. Nothing of God's promise shall be lost in the refining.

God's promises need to be refined, not in themselves, but in the hearts of those to whom they are made. God's promises are not merely external, and therefore possessed of Divine sanctity which admits of no dross. But they are promises living with power in the hearts of the faithful. It is the faithful who need to be purified from earth so as to receive God's promises. At length, when they are purified, God's promises are seen in their true perfection. Our sins mar the promises of the

Incarnate Word. He speaks not only to us for encouragement, but in us as our life.

When the righteous are perfected, the ungodly will be destroyed.

PSALM 13.

THE LONG-CONTINUED EXPECTATION OF GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE

THIS Psalm probably belongs to the time of Saul's persecution. But the whole of David's trouble with Saul had both a Messianic and an anagogical significance. The enemy is our great enemy against whom we are pledged to contend. God has arisen (Ps. 12. 6), but that does not hush the assaults of Satan. We have still to fight manfully.

To be forgotten of God is to be left without Divine manifestations, so that prayer seems to be unanswered. "How long?" The complaint is not the result of distrust, but of expectation. The desertion may seem to the natural heart to be "for ever," but the faithful soul knows that cannot be, and cries "How long?"

God's Face hidden! The wicked boast that God hath forgotten, and that He hides His Face (Ps. 10. 11). But this is the grief of the faithful. We cannot serve God unless we see God. "Lift up the light of Thy countenance!"

The soul is filled with sorrow and the heart is heavy. No need to supply day [and night]. Rather the day is one long night of darkness without God. Satan, the Prince of Darkness, shrouds the whole heaven with his wings.

But during this spiritual night the Psalmist is watching. To yield to it in sleep would be the darkness of death. He therefore prays to have his faith

cheered by Divine illumination. If God is not seen, the fault is on our side. He is there to be seen, but our eyes need to be enlightened so as to see through the overclouding darkness. "The eyes of our understanding must be enlightened." Reason cannot reach to the vision of faith. "Heaven is opened," not by external but by interior manifestation.

The enemy has many evil spirits as his agents to work our overthrow. The power of darkness may exult in transitory victories over us. Their time of punishment is not yet come. Hereafter every victory which they have won against any of God's people will turn to their greater anguish.

So, also, however much the soul of the faithful may be oppressed, nevertheless hereafter it will exult proportionately in the day of God's manifestation. Our spiritual sufferings while God has withheld His consolation will be abundantly recompensed if we have endured patiently.

Now the enemy is high over us. Then we shall sing triumphantly as being exalted in the Lord. These two lines close the two triplets of verses 3, 6.

This Trilogy ends with the grateful acceptance of the law of grace.—Yea! Lord, Thy strength is made perfect in weakness.

Psalm 13. is the longing of the soul for redemption. Psalm 14. is the middle psalm of the Heptad.

PSALM 14.

GOD SEEKING A MAN AFTER HIS OWN MIND

"THE FOOL," *i.e.* the man of merely natural aims, when he sees the people of God left to do God's battle without any show of Divine support, boasts in his false security

that there is no God. Hence it is that corruption spreads throughout society, for faith declines.

But God, although not manifestly interfering, is watching. He leaves men, not because He is indifferent, but because He desires to prove them. Ps. 14. therefore gives the reason of the desertion which Ps. 13. deplored. It is thus that the words of God are being purified, as was seen in Ps. 12. God is looking for His people to be purified from their earthliness, that in them His word may be manifested in its power.

The true silver will not be lost in the refining. The election of grace is not accepted by an arbitrary external selection, but by a disciplinary trial which shows them to have the Divine life within. "The Lord is looking down from Heaven" to see if there is any one who answers to His requirement. So before the flood He looked down, and Noah found grace in His sight. So ere He destroyed Sodom He visited the place to see if there were ten righteous men, and He delivered Lot. Is there now, then, "a man after God's own heart"? (1 Sam. xiii. 14). God looks. God blesses David. Ps. 14. is the special Psalm of David, for his name in Hebrew is the equivalent of Fourteen in its weaker spelling, as it is of Twenty-four in its fuller conception of glory. Can such a Beloved be found? "No, not one." So, then, even David answers not to the Divine demand; yet shall David have the blessing that he may answer to it.

Yes! We see that no one is chosen for God's work as being what God wants. David was chosen, but God would make him what as yet he was not. The true David is not found amongst men, but if we seek after God, God will give His Son to us. For this gift of God our souls must wait in patient love, seeking after God, seeking not the mere development of nature, as if we

should be worthy of God, but seeking to have the life of God Himself perfected in us by grace. David sought though he had not. As we have received we must seek all the more.

Alas! Men do not seek God. Their ignorant carnality prevents their doing so. They rely upon the world, and they seek for the things of the world.

This destroys all brotherly love amongst mankind. God, the Father of all, is unrecognized. So they eat up God's people, seeking merely to get their own gain by oppressing others. "They do not call upon the Lord" at the outset of their actions to seek success by His Blessing. With them "might is right."

Alas, how David himself fell under the snare when he slew Uriah, in order that his gratified passion might not be punished. And yet how surely the punishment came. How do we need to be watchful to see that we are "calling upon the Lord" in all our doings, knowing that nothing can prosper save by His initiating and sanctifying power.

"Whatsoever we ask we receive of Him because we believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another as He gave us commandment" (1 John iii. 22, 23). We cannot believe on the Son of God if we fail to recognize His presence in His saints, the members of His Body. "God is in the righteous generation."

Oh, how will the world shudder when they find the truth of His saying, "He that despiseth you despiseth Me" (Luke x. 16).

The faithful look to God as their refuge, knowing that if they suffer now at the hands of the world, yet they will find eternal security in Him.

God looks down. They look up. Where is the Beloved? Where is the Son? Where is the Anointed of the Lord, who shall be seen seated upon the Holy Hill

of Zion? Out of Zion must come the deliverance! Jacob shall exult. Israel shall find that he has prevailed as a prince with God. His prayers shall have a perfect answer. If we would share that triumph we must be diligent, wrestling with God in prayer until He show Himself.

Probably by the last verse we ought to understand God returning to His captive people. They are delivered from their captivity, *i.e.* their oppression, when God, who has hidden His Face, returns to them. This seems to be the original meaning of the words (Kay. *Cf.* Deut. xxx. 3). God returns to them by sending His Son to be born amongst them. When Christ is born, then the true David, whom God desired to find, is really manifest. He appeared to those who were looking for redemption in Israel. And He, as the Son in whom the Father delights, brings mankind near to God in prayer so that they who seek God in the name of Christ find the fulness of the Divine answer, and are themselves acknowledged of God as His true children.

Trilogy of the Divine Likeness

1. The Divine Pattern (Ps. 15.).
2. To Life through Death (Ps. 16.).
3. Heavenly Satisfaction in Conformity with God (Ps. 17.).

PSALM 15.

THE DIVINE PATTERN

IN this Psalm is set before us the portraiture of Him whom God looked down to find. As Ps. 14. was the Psalm of David, so Ps. 15. is the Psalm of JAH. In Hebrew Jah represents the number Fifteen.

God looked from Heaven to see if there was any one who was wise, and seeking Him. Now man looks up to God and asks who it is that shall be approved of Him, so as

to ascend unto His Holy Hill,—who the Anointed One shall be who is to sit upon the Hill of Zion, and bring deliverance to Israel as God's representative.

The likeness of Christ must be the law of Christ's people.

Perfection in carrying out God's law.
Righteousness in fulfilling God's purpose.
Truth in submission to God's judgement.

This is "being true in love" (Eph. iv. 15). God is the source, the substance, and the sanction of all His conduct. Righteousness amongst the Jews meant almsgiving. Here it means more. It means love.

Love, therefore, is depicted in the following verses acting towards man:—

Love rules his speech,
restrains his actions,
regulates his thoughts.

He feels a sympathy with man as man. The fellowship of human nature is a living bond. Personal individuality does not cause a separation. Those who are his fellows by nature, are his neighbours. He must love them as himself. He must honour all men.

The thoughts of other men's sins does not make him proud of his own integrity. He knows himself to be a sinner. Penitence is, therefore, the basis of his self-regard.

He lives in humility and self-abhorrence before God.
He honours those who live in the fear of the Lord.
He makes the fear of God the law of his social dealings.

He who thus lives with his actions consecrated to God will not seek money as a gain.

He will not seek money by usury.
He will not seek money to harm the innocent.
He will be established securely in the Divine Truth.

He will be true to God, and God will be true to him.

PSALM 16.

TO LIFE THROUGH DEATH

THE Psalmist looks to be received upon God's Holy Hill. The Ideal Man of Ps. 15. is no mere imagination. He comes with the power of God. He calls us to the life of God. "Thou art my Lord; my goods are nothing unto Thee." "I have no god beyond Thee." "All is nothing as compared with Thee. All I can have is found in Thee, or from Thee."

The Psalmist's desire is to attain to this fellowship with God as his end, and he can only receive such a reward as God's gift. He is one who was seeking the Lord (Ps. 14.). He seeks to be what the Lord requires, (Ps. 15.), so he exclaims: "Make me to be numbered with Thy saints in glory everlasting." Now do I make much of them that fear the Lord (Ps. 15. 4), and, Oh! "My welfare is nought without Thee" (Cheyne) and Thine.

These verses are very difficult, but they seem to point to the satisfaction of the soul in God as the common inheritance of all His saints.

"Those who follow other gods seek earthly rewards. The soul can have no thirst worthy of man if it worship and woo a god who merely thirsts for the blood of animals. My soul thirsts for God, as I know He thirsts for me. He made me for Himself. He delights to be my joy. What good, then, can I have beyond Him. He is Himself the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup. He maintains my lot. If I give myself to Him, He will give Himself to me. This is a goodly heritage."

The strophe is difficult, but it seems to breathe with an intense devotional rapture, the fervour of faith anticipating the fruition that shall be hereafter in the marriage-supper of the Lamb.

In contrast with the worshippers of false gods, the Psalmist rejoices to feel God upon his right hand, his Charioteer through life, "wounding even kings in the day of His wrath." With Him he holds communings during the night-season of this present life, and looks for the Day of the Resurrection.

Troubles chasten him, making him to feel his sin, but he fears not the sleep of death. The true day is that which is yet to come.

The loving providence of God is leading him onward through present darkness to the light which is beyond the grave.

God is on his right hand now. He will be called to God's Right Hand hereafter (*cf.* Ps. 110.).

This Psalm is remarkable, both as being expressly quoted in the New Testament, and as giving such plain testimony to the belief in the resurrection of the flesh.

The text of verses 2, 3, is almost certainly corrupt; but probably without material injury to the sense which seems to follow on in perfect harmony with the preceding Psalm as far as sense can be got out of the present words.

PSALM 17.

HEAVENLY SATISFACTION IN CONFORMITY WITH
GOD

THE Psalmist calls upon Jehovah to "hear righteousness." He does not ask for mercy, but he speaks with a claim. That claim is the righteousness of Christ in the fulness of which alone he claims admission to God's Right Hand and the seat upon His Holy Hill.

God in mercy gave Christ to be the propitiation for our sins, but the Psalmist here contemplates not the

mercy for which he might sue in his sinfulness, but for the acceptance which belongs of right to the Divine Covenant in Christ.

Notice.—The righteousness of Christ.

The piercing cry of the sin-stricken heart.

The life of the absolved penitent, cleansed from guile.

He appeals for "the judgement to come forth from the presence" of God, for God is Love, and that God's eyes may "look upon equity," inasmuch as he himself has been restored to the Divine Covenant.

The touchstone of the heart is the Heart of Jesus. God proves us by fellowship with Him. He visits us in the night of sorrow, the darkness of the Cross. He assays us by the searching of His Holy Spirit as fire penetrating our whole frame.

My mouth shall not offend. "Out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh." The Fire of the Holy Ghost which has purified his heart will inspire his lips.

The Psalmist has made the Word of God his law, and has kept from the paths of worldly counsel. The example of Christ present to the soul preserves from slipping the feet that follow Him.

This protestation is followed by a prayer for God's protection from the enemies round about. "The apple of God's eye" indicates the Human Nature of the protecting Messiah. "The shadow of His wings" is the sheltering power of the Holy Spirit, as when He brooded over the face of the waters.

The children of the world are "like a lion." Their father, the devil, goeth about seeking whom he may devour. The multitude are individualized in this personality of malice. The Psalmist cries out for them to be brought upon their knees. "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon" was the cry of old. The sentence is broken

up, as it were, in ejaculations. Let God come and smite them!

They are partakers of God's bounty in this world. This aggravates their sin. Yet their wealth only remains for their babes. They have to leave it and them. Its very continuance in the possession of their offspring only shows that it is not theirs.

O how different that which the Psalmist can claim! This is an eternal possession. To see God's Face in righteousness! This is eternal life. To be like Him! This is eternal joy.

Thus do these Fifteen Psalms carry us in a beautiful sequence of thought and experience, from the entrance of Christ upon His struggle to the peaceful joy of the Blessed in Eternity.

Ps. 18. evidently was intended by whoever arranged the Psalms to form a distinct beginning. The Psalms of David now go on again without a break until Ps. 33., which is anonymous. This gives a fresh section, and the new section consists of Fifteen Psalms like the preceding one.

THE SECOND QUINDECAD

REDEMPTION PERFECTING THE WORK OF CREATION

This section admits of sub-divisions exactly like the preceding.

I.—CHRIST'S PERSONAL MINISTRY

1. Trilogy of the Divine Mission (Pss. 18.-20.).
The Celebration of Messiah's Victory (Pss. 21.).
2. Trilogy of the Avenger's Conflict (Pss. 22.-24.).
The Intercession of the Righteous Redeemer for the People (Ps. 25.).

II.—THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY

1. Trilogy of Renewal through Mediatorial Grace (Pss. 26.-28.).
The Song of the Seven Thunders: The Divine Word (Ps. 29.).
Trilogy of Redeemed Humanity (Pss. 30.-32.).

Trilogy of the Divine Mission

1. The Exodus of the Redeemer from beneath the Earth (Ps. 18.).
2. God, Creator, Legislator, and Redeemer (Ps. 19.).
3. The welcome of the Saviour King (Ps. 20.).

PSALM 18.

THE ELECT SERVANT, THE SON OF GOD, RISING
FROM THE EGYPT OF SATAN'S POWER

AS Moses went into Egypt in order to deliver the Children of Israel, so the Son of God has come into the world to deliver the people of God from the tyranny of Satan. His whole life was an Exodus which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke ix. 31). He did not come into this world, as if He would naturally make His home here, so that the Death upon the Cross was an overthrow of human expectations. He came into this world for the purpose of leading us out of it by the overthrow of the powers of death which hold sway over all who are living in this world, powers which had to be shaken off by dying. He came to "blot out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, nailing it to His Cross," He left His dead Body behind Him, and the tyrant could no longer assail it. He "put off from Himself the principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them on Calvary" (Col. ii. 14, 15). His subsequent descent into hell is a manifestation that He has been triumphant in this our earthly state of bondage.

The Son of God showed Himself as the true Servant of God. He conquered Satan not by descending in power and great glory as He will do when He comes in judgment. He appears, as out of nothingness, "in the depth below" (Ps. 7.), possessing in Himself the substance of Divine reality while assuming the emptiness of created form. The Creator's self-manifestation would make the bubble of creation collapse. He comes to solidify with eternal life and truth that which God originally formed for His own glory, and, therefore to overthrow the evil powers, which, by repudiating the Divine Sovereignty, have bound the world under darkness and emptiness. He comes to restore light and life to them that accept Him. He took upon Himself the form of a slave, that He might give us the freedom of God's children.

The Kingdom of Redemption, made triumphant upon Calvary (Ps. 22. 22), is perfected by His Ascension (Ps. 24.).

The Doxology of Ps. 18. intimates that the Jews will reject the Messiah for whom they were looking, but a Gentile Church of the Redeemed will sing His praise.

This Psalm is so important that it will be well to notice the several strophes.

1. The Invocation.
2. The Saviour's appeal feeling His Humanity bound by Satanic tyranny.
3. The attendant convulsions of the Spiritual World.
4. The Divine Chariot.
5. The manifestation of the Word.
6. The deliverance of the Manhood.
7. The righteous claims of the Beloved.
8. The law of Divine Justice.
9. The glorification of Messiah's Humanity.
10. The con-substantial Godhead.
11. The condescending power of the Incarnation.

12. The overthrow of the Powers of Darkness.
 13. The utter perdition of the lost.
 14. The Jews rejecting Messiah: the Gentiles accepting Him.
- Doxology.
 Deliverance from the Jews.
 Exaltation among the Gentiles.

So we must recite this Psalm as having a most lively interest in the wonders which it relates. It is not an imagination of the past. We sing it not as the song of Moses, but as a song of living truth for our ourselves in Christ. It is a reality continuously developing in spiritual power, so that we have our personal share therein.

We little realize how great the dominion of Satan is. We are too apt to think that he might be cast out of the world, or brought into subjection, and that then all would be well. But that cannot be. The earth, and all that is in it must be burnt up. All that is in it is tainted by Satan's inherent and corrupting energy. When Christ delivers His people there will be a new world, possessing powers as inherently righteous as this world is inherently sinful.

We are not to think of earthly objects as if they were neutral. They are either infected by the curse of Satan, which was let loose afresh upon the material creation by Adam's sin, or else they are sanctified by the Word of God and prayer, so as to be the true instruments of the Incarnate Word. Pantheistic philosophies express the perverted conception of a mysterious truth. The true God, the Creator, lives in the Infinity of His Personal glory distinct from the world. That world He Himself created out of nothing. On the other hand, "the prince of this world," the god of this age (2 Cor. iv. 4), permeates the whole world with his subtle presence, so that he needs to be exorcised if we would use anything with

safety. His presence is a created spiritual power, but the material world was given to him at his creation, and he still rules therein, distorting to purposes of evil the capacities which, by God's original creation, should have been subservient to developments of sanctity. We must feel his power in all the noblest objects of creation round about us. All the wealth and glory of the world becomes a bond to him, unless it be made dead to him by the consecration of grace, the redeeming triumph of the Cross, and the renewing efficacy of the Spirit.

How should we shrink from all that the natural heart calls great, if we could appreciate the foulness of corruption which naturally spreads its intoxicating influence through all that we are apt to desire. As a garment that is infected spreads disease which our senses cannot beforehand anticipate, so all that is in the world requires to be disinfected of the subtle agency of evil ere it can be used with safety. There is no spiritual disinfectant but the Cross of Christ.

The Israelites groaned by reason of their bondage, but when the time of their deliverance came they rebelled against their deliverer. Alas! so it is now. Mankind does, indeed, by nature feel the miserable bondage of the flesh with its manifold necessities. Nevertheless, men rebel at having to share the struggle of the Cross. We must not do so, we must thank God that "He has saved us from our enemies," and we must press onward, following Christ.

II.—The world, the flesh, and the devil, hold us bound in their cords, but God is ready to hear our cry. Our deliverance is in the fellowship of God's supernatural covenant. We must not apply this Psalm to any mere temporal deliverance, although the deliverance from the hand of Saul may have suggested to David the thought of celebrating in song the spiritual triumph which God

had in store. He who knew during the long period of Saul's persecution that the Kingdom must in the end belong to Himself and to His seed for ever, could look forward not only to the delayed subjugation of a hostile maniac, but to an empire whose vitality Death and Satan could no longer cramp, boundless in extent, and glorified in the eternity of the throne of God. This triumph of heavenly glory involves the collapse of all external barriers. The hardness of the earthly organization must melt as the frozen earth gives way to softer influences ere the germs of the germs of new life can put forth their tender grace, as the vegetation which came forth at God's call from the barren globe.

III.—If we go forward in the spiritual power of Christ, our carnal nature must forego its claims. The grasp of the tyrant is relaxed by the efforts of faith. The fire from the mouth of God is the gift of the Spirit which smites the Evil One, while the faithful look up to Him. He bows the heaven so as to display all round about us His glorious power, not by visible but by spiritual guardianship.

IV.—Angel hosts surround Him. The cherub-car of the Incarnate glory is at hand. God is near to help us. The eye of man sees Him not, but hailstones and coals of fire make manifest the Holy One of Israel in the midst of us, with sure vengeance from on High. "I will repay, saith the Lord" (Rom. xii. 19).

V., VI.—The Triune God in whose Name we are called to dwell, scatters our enemies, thundering with Divine power, while He rebukes them in human form, and at the same time becomes our stay. The spirit of love wherewith He delights in us, is leading us forth from the straitness of our prison-house to the expanse of His glorious liberty.

VII., VIII.—The power of God works towards us in

proportion as we act towards Him. He who accepts the perfect oblation of Christ will not reject us even though we be imperfect, if we are walking in the ways of Christ the Lord. The Spirit will give us an abundant recompense of holy joy, with ever-increasing gifts of grace, if we use what He has given, but God does not deal with us in any arbitrary manner. He deals with us in loving mercy, but He also deals with us according to justice.

IX., X.—Our nature is as a lamp which has gone out. God lights it with a sun-like radiance. He illuminates, that we may know. He strengthens with elasticity that we may do. See what He has done *in* human nature, striving against the powers of this world. Then shall we see also how sure His promise is, of what He will do *for* human nature. The fires of manifold affliction do but purify the manifestation of His Word speaking in our souls. He will defend us, interposing His Passion as our security against the enemy, lifting us up so that we shall stand secure upon His Rock-like Majesty, where no claim of the Evil One can assail us any more, since we are purified by the Holy Ghost.

XI.—We are to look to the humiliation of Christ as the law of our exaltation. If we would be exalted with Him we must submit to His Cross. God gives us the protection of His grace, God lifts us up by the Right Hand of His Divine power, but only by means of the Cross. To this loving correction He in love submitted for us, that our exaltation, when we have suffered awhile, may be His reward. He is gone to prepare a place for us, in the infinite glory of Heaven.

The enemies are the Powers of Darkness. We are following Christ in the war of good against evil. Our eye must not spare anything that is evil, however specious it may be. We must "mortify our members which are upon the earth," not turning again until we have con-

sumed all remains of evil passion. Our bodies cannot have their part in the glory of the resurrection until we have entirely "put off the old Adam with his deeds." So must our members through fellowship with the Cross of Christ become "instruments of righteousness unto holiness" (Rom. vi. 13).

XII.—This we cannot do of ourselves. "Who shall deliver me?" It is God who girdeth me with strength of war, the power of Divine grace.

XIII.—The enemies cried unto the Lord. What are we to understand by this? Probably that they cry out against us, to accuse us before the Lord, as Satan accused Job.

We see herein the blessedness of true penitence. If the struggle of penitence is sincere, the sins of the past will no more be remembered. But the struggle must be with perseverance until that which once gave us delight is really emptied out as the mire of the streets.

XIV.—"This is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith." The victory of Christ over the world, which is specially portrayed in the closing Doxology, is to have its counterpart in the entire surrender of our whole being. The holiness to which we are to attain along with Christ, becoming "more than conquerors" through Him, is entirely His work. We are glorified through Him by the subjugation of evil passions. But not only so: He is glorified in us by the exercise of His renewing power. We who were sinners of the Gentiles, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ (Gal. ii. 15; Eph. ii. 13), but this can only be if we have a true contrition. The alien heart cringing with mere external submission gives not glory to Christ, neither does it gain glory in Him. All such must be cast off as the Jews were cast off of old.

XV.—*Doxology*.—The final Doxology is again ad-

dressed to the Holy Trinity making the fifth address in this Psalm. In verse 7 the appeal to Jehovah is collective, and in verse 42 it is the sinner, not the Psalmist, who appeals to Jehovah. Now in this Doxology, instead of the threefold Jehovah, we have the Second Person praised as giving "Salvations unto His King," a Hebrew equivalent of the Name of Jesus. The Father is Jehovah. Equal with Him is the God of my Salvation. From these two Persons proceeds Jehovah the Holy Ghost, by whom and to whom we are to give thanks, being made partakers of His Presence in the Catholic Church. The first two Persons are called "the Godhead that giveth me vengeance," because the Holy Ghost proceeds from them by an undivided act. The word El, Godhead, in verse 48, should thus be distinguished from the more Personal title, Elohim, which answers to our word, God, in verse 47.

"Great salvations giveth He unto His King, to David and his seed for evermore." These salvations are summed up in His own name, Jesus. They said of old, "There is no salvation for him in God" (Ps. 3.). We have to acknowledge that there is no salvation but in Him. He, by His inherent Divine power, is saved from the dangers incident to His Humanity. "He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and, being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him" (Heb. v. 9).

PSALM 19.

GOD, CREATOR, LEGISLATOR, AND REDEEMER

THE Redeemer has come into the world to deliver mankind from Sheol and the power of Satan, as Moses delivered Israel from Egypt and the power of Pharaoh. He came in the form of one enslaved as Israel had been

in Egypt. The preceding Psalm has set before us the vocation of the Divine Servant, and while it finds its true accomplishment in the Person of Christ, it has its subordinate application with reference to all who share with Him the glorious exodus with all its spiritual surroundings amidst the outward humiliation of the Cross.

But now we are called to consider who this Redeemer is.

He is the Creator of the world. He is the Lord, the Lawgiver of Israel.

So Ps. 19. closes with the exclamation: "My Rock, My Redeemer!"

It is very remarkable that this Psalm begins, as it were, with the name of Jesus, for in Hebrew the first hemistich has for its numerical value the significant 888, which is the number of the Greek name of Jesus, and of its Hebrew equivalent, "the Salvation of our God" (Ps. 98. 4). "The Heavens declare the glory of God."

Ps. 18. sets forth the Redeemer coming up from the depths of the earth and shaking all the powers of this lower world. "Who is this, then, that cometh from Edom?" It is the Creator whom all the hosts of Heaven worship and obey. They have been formed so as to symbolize the higher relationships in which He, as the Sun of Righteousness, will gather a higher world round about Himself.

Man, possessing the gift of personality, of which he is conscious in himself by virtue of God's communicated Image, recognizes that what is impersonal can be only symbolical. He who formed these things has Personality in Himself. Though we see Him not, yet His works, as they symbolize various attributes and personal relationships, attest the transcendent glory of Him who is the Author of them all. All these creatures are related

one to the other in the universe of being, because they come forth into being from the mind and will of Him who is One and unchangeable.

The material heavens, and the moral organization of the law given by the typical Redeemer of old, are leading onward to the Redemption which Messiah has to accomplish.

We must rise up to the spiritual demands of His law if we would partake of His Redemption.

PSALM 20.

THE WELCOME OF THE SAVIOUR KING

THUS has the Redeemer come to Zion. He whose glory the heavens declare, He who is the Lawgiver greater than Moses, He is the Son of God: He is the King of Israel. This Trilogy therefore ends with a welcome to the Saviour King.

Ps. 3. spoke of Messiah's entrance upon His struggle, but merely as a suffering Man. Ps. 20. welcomes Him going forth to war as the King rejoicing in the Divine Benediction. He goes forth in sacrificial power.

The offerings of the sanctuary by which the Divine favour is secured are not without an intimation of better sacrifices than the fat victim and the sprinkled meal. Messiah going forth now in the strength of acceptance through sacrifice is He whom future prophets will behold going forth in the strength of His own Sacrifice, Himself the Priest, upon His Throne, Himself the Lamb of God. The Name of the God of Jacob cannot be purchased as a power by empty oblations. That Name can be no high refuge save for Him to whom it belongs of right, the Son of God.

In this Divine Name Messiah goes forth as the Consubstantial Son. This Divine Name is still His strength,

and we have to go forth to war along with Him, as His true members, partaking of the Divine life.

We have to invoke the Divine assistance in the Name of the Only-Begotten, for our battle is His. We ask of God to accept the spiritual fatness, the fragrant merits, of the sacrifice of Christ, and the Eucharistic elements which we present before God in connection with this sacrifice are truly His offering, not ours, although presented to the Father by our hands.

Whatever we ask the Father in Christ's Name, He has promised that He will give to us. Well may we rejoice in the Name of the Lord our God.

Our King is glorified when God answers our prayer.

With this Psalm we are encouraged to go forth in the Name of Christ, and fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil (Ps. 18. 5, 6), from whom our Redeemer has set us free. So, also, in all the acts to which God calls us. Nevertheless, in all, the glory must be given to Jesus. "Jehovah, save the King!"

PSALM 21.

THE CELEBRATION OF MESSIAH'S VICTORY

THIS Psalm follows. It is a central Psalm between two trilogies, celebrating the eternal glory of Jesus. It makes a break before those Psalms of profound mystery in which the heavenly aspect of redeeming power is to be detailed. Ps. 18. introduced the Redeemer rising up with triumphant power over the hellish antagonists whom He had to subdue. The succeeding Trilogy will exhibit Him in the later stages of His triumph, beginning with His death, when He leaves this world. The present Psalm praises God for the victory, and foretells the triumph of Messiah's Kingdom, when He shall return and all His enemies shall be slain before

Him. None shall escape. We must take heed that we throw our whole hearts into the interests of Christ's Kingdom. "Thy Kingdom come."

The "fiery oven" is prepared for the devil and his angels, and those who accept not His redeeming sovereignty must perish with His enemies.

The ejaculation, "Be Thou exalted, Lord, in Thine own strength," prepares for the vision of the Conqueror in the depth of His humiliation, when all that strength seems to have been held back from Him. Nevertheless, that weakness is His true exaltation. It had been no glory for Jesus to be exalted by surroundings of created power. His endurance in the uttermost of created weakness is the manifestation of His personal strength, inherent and inalienable, as the Son of God. In that strength He will go forth through the gate of death, and manifest what could not be manifested within the sphere of this dead world. So will He be exalted, having triumphed over the powers of hell and death by His Passion.

Trilogy of the Avenger's Conflict

1. The Redemptive Struggle and Victory (Ps. 22.).
2. The Exodus of the Redeemer (Ps. 23.).
3. The Triumphal Procession of the Ascension (Ps. 24.).

PSALM 22.

THE REDEMPTIVE STRUGGLE AND VICTORY

THE Son of God has accomplished His Father's purpose. He is ready to say "It is finished." Has He not already said, "I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do"? (John xvii. 4).

He comes, then, to the Cross as a Conqueror. Satan

has been finally vanquished in Gethsemane. The Powers of Darkness gather round Him once more for three hours but only to prove their impotence. Now, as He leaves the world, is the manifestation of His power, which makes the Centurion exclaim: "Truly this Man was the Son of God." He has but to take away, like Samson, the gates of Gaza, the "strong" gates of this world of death.

The three Psalms, 22.-24., constitute a trilogy of the world beyond.

Entering upon the final stage of His struggle, having to shake off from Himself the powers of this evil world, He asks the question, "Why hast Thou forsaken me?" Why these three-and-thirty years in which I have had to live apart from the glorifying action of My Godhead? This humiliation has not been without a reason. We, as we commemorate this Passion, must consider well the relation of that reason to ourselves.

The first portion of the Psalm develops the question. The last section gives the answer.

The answer, however, is given here to the question, "*Cur Deus Homo*," not by the satisfaction of logical speculation as to necessities, whose mystery eludes our grasp, but by the glory of the remunerative exaltation whose benefits we are called to share.

God's dealing with His people cannot be without a purpose: but He who quotes these words while He hangs upon the Cross is able confidently to affirm that God has not forsaken Him as a penalty. In the weakness of man He has to show the strength of God. It was man that had to bruise the serpent's head, and only in the nature of man, and acting according to the law of human nature, could He win that victory. He was never so forsaken as to be estranged from the consubstantial unity of the Divine Love. Even while acting in

the weakness of the flesh, He acted in the power of the Eternal, anointing, Spirit, by virtue of the Hypostatic Union.

This holiness is the force of His question. "Thou hast forsaken others because of their sins, but why hast Thou forsaken Me, whereas I am perfectly true to Thy will? The suffering of the outer nature is widely different from that salvation which I have come to work."

We must not think of this Psalm as if it implied any complaint against the Father's will. It is the acknowledgement of His loving Providence in the truth of His unchanging holiness.

He asks the question because the time is come for God to give the answer.

He has conquered Death and Sheol, and the men of Belial (Ps. 18.). He comes unscathed by sin to these gates of the enemy's country. Now is to be manifested what the Redemption is which His life on earth was to accomplish.

The three hours of darkness are ended, and the vanquished powers of sin have retreated to their hidden dwelling-place. Now, then, must the issue be declared. God delivered His people of old, but none had been reduced to such extremity as that in which He finds Himself. He is a worm and no man. He sets forth before the Father the surroundings of contumely which are on every side, the multitude of men making mock at Him, their taunts at His religious claims.

His very birth an act of Divine power; yet see Him now.

Bulls of Bashan are round about Him, infuriate as the lion of hell!

His weakness of body drained of blood!

His bones disjointed by the rude crucifixion!

His heart no longer capable of proper organic action,

since there is not blood whose circulation has to be maintained! It is like melting wax!

His palate dried as with the dust of death by the same cause!

Dogs have come about Him, the heathen executioners.

They seize upon His hands and feet. The reference to crucifixion which the Septuagint saw, is as certain by this expression if we reject the mention of the piercing, as if we retain it.

They stretch out His Body.

They part His garments and cast lots.

Such is the picture of His present estate. Now, then, is the time for God to interfere and show why all this has come to pass.

The Conqueror seems to gather up the strength of His Divine nature.

"Deliver me from the sword of earthly tyranny, from the dog of heathen rule: yea! more than that!" He is about to spring into the world of spirits. "Save Me from the lion's mouth, the all-swallowing grave, from Satan and the bison's horns that are waiting for Me to descend and destroy."

The deliverance is not a gradual one, as when a human power shakes off a tyranny until it has asserted its freedom. The power remains to the very end too great for man to shake off, and yet up to the very end Messiah has now shown that this superior power could never really enslave Him. He has throughout been true to God. He looks for God to deliver Him, acknowledging His righteousness, and lifting Him up above His foes.

This Divine deliverance is exhibited in its instantaneous operation by the suddenness with which the word of thanksgiving breaks in upon the final distich of

appeal. The cry of human weakness changes to the utterance of Divine power.

"Yea! from the bison's horns, Thou hast answered me." The victory is won. God has welcomed the Conqueror. The Redemption is complete.

While He was in this world the gates remained shutting out His Humanity from the bright triumph. The gates which He had to take away were spiritual powers whose dominion He was to shatter, by the passing of His soul from the region of bodily life, such as belongs to man's prison-house, to the region of spiritual life, where He would show Himself no longer compassed with infirmity, but triumphant with the Spirit of God.

We are so accustomed to look to Ps. 22, as setting before us the details of our Lord's Passion that we lose sight of its triumphant character. It is not the cry of one crushed by the sense of a struggle which is awaiting him, but of one who, having come into the lowest depths of his trial without any hurt, appeals for the reward of victory which is assured to him.

It is not a recession from the victorious acclamations that greeted the Conqueror in Ps. 21. We hear the outburst, "Be Thou exalted, Lord, in Thine own strength," and we see Him like an athlete whose task is accomplished, reaching out in His own strength to lay hold on the reward which the Father holds out to Him. This is further exemplified by the Gospel narrative. The cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me," is not uttered until the Powers of Darkness have retired vanquished from the Cross.

He has triumphed in His own created perfection as the Son of Man, although sustained amidst His sufferings by His inviolable perfection as the Son of God.

His question has been answered. We seem to share in the triumphant gaze of the Redeemer looking into the

depths of darkness which hitherto have been hid from human sight. He sees the bison hosts flying before Him into the abyss. He sees the multitudes of mankind waiting for His redemption to take effect, and welcoming Him as their Deliverer.

The moment of His victory resounds with the retrospective portraiture of the sinful world which He leaves. It resounds also with the jubilant homage of His self-consecration to glorify God in the new Kingdom which He is about to establish.

He calls upon the faithful as His brethren to praise the Lord. We may consider this as being addressed to the Old Testament saints whom He is about to set free.

In the midst of the congregation will He praise God, the congregation of Patriarchal Saints waiting to be delivered.

From these He looks forward to the *great* congregation of the Catholic Church called out of all nations which He is about to establish.

In their midst, and as their High Priest in Heaven, He will pay the vows of Eucharistic praise to God, who has given Him the victory.

They who share His Passion shall feed upon this oblation in Holy Communion.

The Church is to gather into itself all nations of the world.

Jesus will reign over all.

The "fat ones of earth" in "the great congregation" are contrasted with the departed spirits of the older congregation whom He would redeem from Sheol.

So that all generations who have died, and who have yet to go to dust must kneel before Him.

He saved not His own soul from dying.

His seed are those to whom He gives power to become the Sons of God. They are counted to the Lord for a generation.

The Church shall continue on with Divine life to ages yet unborn.

From age to age it will proclaim His Redemptive work.

PSALM 23.

THE EXODUS OF THE REDEEMED

THE position of Ps. 23. naturally leads us to consider it as describing the refreshment of Paradise. The souls that were waiting in the pit wherein was no water, find the joy of the still waters and the green pastures where Messiah leads them.

Primarily belonging to those who were waiting, bound in the valley of the shadow of death, for Messiah to descend and set them free, it is now the sweet song of all who are buried with Christ by baptism into death. This world is indeed "the land of drought and of the shadow of death," typified by the wilderness through which the people of Israel had to march (Jer. ii. 6). Sin has caused this barrenness. The joy of the Good Shepherd's guidance is because He leads "in paths of righteousness."

The rod and the staff give comfort, the one for discipline, the other for protection. We have to take up the Cross and follow Christ, but there is no joy to be experienced on earth like the joy which the Cross gives.

The table of the Lord where we feed upon the Body of Christ exalted now in Heaven is our strength whereby to resist our enemies. Our Head is exalted to the Right Hand of God, and while we feed on His Body we partake of His anointing. So He Himself says, "It is the" anointing "Spirit which quickeneth," and again, "Ye shall see the Son of Man ascend where He was before." We are all made to drink into One Spirit, while we partake of the cup of His most precious Blood.

PSALM 24.

THE TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION OF THE ASCENSION

IN Ps. 23, the faithful in the grave acknowledge the security and heavenly joy which belongs to them as the flock of the Good Shepherd. Now we seem to hear the shout of other voices. The angel host burst forth in glorious acclamation.

The Lord has gone down below the earth to gather to Himself the people whom He has redeemed. He has shown Himself in triumphant power. The hosts of the enemy are conquered, and the work set forth in Ps. 18, is accomplished. Messiah, the chosen One of Zion, has shown that the world which the enemy had alienated by his rebellion, is indeed His own. He is the Creator of all.

This Psalm corresponds exactly with the Song of Angelic Praise to the Redeemer as being also the Creator, which we have in Rev. iv. 11.

It now carries on the moral portraiture of His glorious character which had been given in Ps. 15. He is able to take possession of all by His creative omnipotence. He is worthy so to do for He is the perfect pattern of goodness to which all creatures must be conformed, who would share in the Kingdom of God's Holy Hill. The Psalm looks forward to the culminating adoration of God's All-Holy Majesty in Ps. 99.

The redeemed, then, if they are to follow the Conqueror, must abide in His likeness. It is a Psalm of moral praise uttered primarily in honour of the Conqueror, and now echoing round about as a law of admonition to all who would follow on so as to profit by the victory. What Ps. 15, says of JAH Himself is here extended to the generation of them that know the Lord, our Righteousness.

Thus the angels summon all to follow Messiah who know Him in this character. His people shall be all righteous. They are the true "Jacob" who have wrestled in such reality as to obtain a blessing from the Lord, and to see His Face, like Jacob, their forefather, at Peniel.

The hosts of saints are rallied for the march.

It is through the gateway of infernal powers that Messiah has to go forward in His Ascension. There the expectant hosts rally round Him. The Powers of Darkness have to confess His Sovereignty. He has conquered them.

A way has been made through the prison-house.

Now the gates of hell are taken away. The gates of Heaven welcome Him ascending to the spiritual world. He who entered the nether world a Conqueror from this world of earthly life, went there alone. He passes on in the resurrection to the joy of spiritual life, having round about Him the multitude of the Redeemed. He has "risen for their justification." They have obtained His "righteousness from the God of their salvation." Death can no longer have dominion over them. He who is the King of Glory is no longer a solitary figure. He is the "Lord of hosts."

PSALM 25.

THE INTERCESSION OF THE RIGHTEOUS
REDEEMER FOR HIS PEOPLE

THIS Psalm divides this Quindecad as Ps. 10, divided the former one. It is also, like that, an Alphabetical Psalm. But whereas that spoke of Antichrist's apparent victory over the Church, this speaks of Christ's triumphant Intercession.

"Some of the most precious spiritual treasures of the

Church have been drawn from this Alphabetical Psalm. Thus verse 6 (*rememiscere miserationum tuarum*) gave name to 'Reminiscere Sunday,' verse 12 (*oculi mei semper ad Dominum*) to 'Oculi Sunday.' Luther put this Psalm into his Office for the Dying, to be used after the receiving of Holy Communion, and Selnecker's beautiful hymn for the dying (*Allein nach Dir, Herr Jesu Christ*) grew out of verse 1."—*Delitzsch*.

He who had asked in Ps. 22. why God had forsaken Him, knowing as He did, His own spotless perfection, now asks of God not to remember the sins and offences of His youth, but to remember who He is, the well-beloved Son. "The *Heb.* (*with inimitable tenderness*) 'Remember to me Thou.'"—*Kay*.

The sins which He bore were not His own. They were the sins of human nature in its youth, *i.e.* before He regenerated it by union with Himself. So "He maketh intercession for the transgressors."

The reorganising power of His intercession is well symbolised by the alphabetical character of the Psalm.

As we plead the merits of Christ in this Psalm we must seek to be led by the Holy Spirit as He was led. We must lose ourselves in His Divine Headship, so that our sins may not be remembered against us while we live in the unity of His Body.

We look for deliverance, verse 2; compassion, verse 6; forgiveness, verse 18. But also for teaching, verse 8; guidance, verse 5; and so to be clothed with the perfection and uprightness of the paths of Jehovah, verse 21. The merits of Christ which plead for our forgiveness are a pledge of guidance in the way for those who take up His Cross, verse 9; a revelation of truth to them that walk in the way, verse 10; and of Divine life, so as to glorify the Name of the living Lord, verse 11.

"If the Son shall make us free, then are we free

indeed" (John viii. 36). This is the redemption from the power of sin which is the object of prayer in verse 22.

The Psalm in its closing appeal uses the name Elohim, the only occurrence of the name between Ps. 14. and Ps. 36. It is an acknowledgement that Jehovah, the Covenant God to whom Israel pleads, is God the Creator. The heavens declare His Eternal Godhead (Ps. 19. 2). Redemption rests upon its truth (Ps. 22. 2).

Trilogy of Renewal through Mediatorial Grace

1. The Lord our Righteousness (Ps. 26.).
2. Light and Life in the Divine Fruition (Ps. 37.).
3. The Struggle concluded (Ps. 28.).

PSALM 26.

THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

SO we come to a trilogy of renewal through mediatorial grace.

The redemption so earnestly claimed in Ps. 25. 22 is the ground-work of the approach to God's altar which is the subject of Ps. 26.

The appeal to Jehovah, as Judge, as Mediator, as the Sanctifier searching the reins and the heart, brings us into God's Presence, on whom we trust, and we are thus separated from the ungodly world.

The laver wherein the priests washed before approaching the altar was a symbol of the innocency of the New Covenant given to us in Christ.

In setting forth the merits of Christ according to the appeal of the preceding Psalm, we show forth His wondrous works.

Thus do we look to be separated from the world.

Again we find the threefold Jehovah as being Himself the life of our worship. The altar is His, the filial rela-

tionship of the Only-Begotten. The House is His, the Humanity which the Son has assumed. The Spirit is His, by whose power the full choirs utter the voice of praise.

PSALM 27.

LIGHT AND LIFE IN THE DIVINE FRUITION

OUR prayer as Christians depends upon the glory wherein our great High Priest is exalted.

In the days of His Flesh, the enemies who assailed Him "went backward and fell." The heart of Jesus quailed not at the assaults made upon Him. In Gethsemane He asked life, that "the cup might pass from Him." "He asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest Him a long life, even for ever and ever" (Ps. 21. 4). Now the Father has glorified the Son "with the glory which He had with Him before the world was." Therefore as a Priest upon His throne He celebrates the jubilant sacrifices of praise wherein His Church is to join. His prayer was uttered in the mysterious fellowship of the Triune Life. He prayed to the Father, His Humanity was henceforth to be the House of the Lord for ever, glorified by the beauty of the Eternal anointing Spirit.

It is He who still speaks in His Church.

His glorified Body, by the merits which the Holy Ghost causes it to shed forth, is the plea of intercession which the Church militant is able always to put forth. Whatsoever we ask the Father in His Name, He will give it to us. So does the prayer continue. They who come to Christ may have to leave father and mother below, but they must look up to Jesus "at God's Right Hand."

Many enemies are round about, but we look forward to "the land of the living." There Messiah is glorified.

There is God's House, and there we shall "see the goodness of the Lord."

PSALM 28.

THE STRUGGLE CONCLUDED

CHRIST speaks in His Church. The Divine Sonship, which is the intercessory power giving efficacy to the prayers of His Humanity is, the Rock. "In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength, *i.e.* the Rock of Ages" (Isa. xxvi. 4).

The prayer is that the members of His Body may not be cast away as the ungodly. Those who do not belong to the Body of Christ cannot share in this Intercession. Christ does not ask for individuals, as we may pray with special interest in some. His Intercession is the application of His merits to those who have sought a vital and covenanted union with Himself, so that He is the Head of the Body of which they are the members.

Those who do not belong to His Body must be left to their natural estate of condemnation (John iii. 18). He will not build them up. His ministry is for the building up of His Body. "Charity buildeth up," that is to say, the power of the Holy Ghost, coming to the members of Christ from the Head.

Those who seek not the covenant of faith seek peace with their neighbours by worldly promises of reformation, but this is done upon worldly principles of social life, and so "evil is in their hearts," the evil of this wicked world.

They join in the struggle against Messiah, "not giving heed to the work of His hands" upon the Cross, not accepting His atonement.

The Doxology is addressed to the Triune Jehovah, the Lord who hears prayer, the Lord who is our stronghold, gathering us into His Body, the Lord, the Spirit, who is

the strength of that Body, the stronghold of salvation to His anointed One—that is to say, the power whereby every member of His Body attains salvation.

The last verse (which is incorporated into our *Te Deum*) is addressed to Christ on behalf of His inheritance (Ps. 2.). He who shepherds them now will lift them up to His own throne of glory in the Great Day of Judgement.

PSALM 29.

THE SONG OF THE SEVEN THUNDERS

THE Shepherd who upbuilds the faithful (Ps. 28. 5) is the Eternal Word to whom the Father has committed all judgement (John v. 22). He is the Lord who sate enthroned on high when the flood swept away man's sinful race, but He saved Noah and his family in the Ark. The same Lord "sitteth as King for ever."

Nine is the number of Godhead, and Twenty-nine especially signifies the Divine Sonship. The Name Jehovah occurs in the Psalm eighteen times, a number specially signifying perfection and "regeneration" in Divine Life, so that it is rightly associated with the Day of regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of His glory" (Matt. xix. 28).

The sevenfold Voice anticipates the Apocalyptic manifestation given to St John.

The threefold ascription of homage with which the Psalm opens, is gathered up in one call to the heavenly host to bow down and "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." "A host of gods on Zion's towery steep" (*Bp. Heber*.) They are not the sons of gods after the manner of an Hesiodic Theogony. Neither are they consubstantially the sons of God, as He is who sits on high. They are the sons of God as having been called

into existence by His Word to image forth various attributes of the Supreme Being. They are the offspring of Divine power, called to some subordinate fellowship of Personality with Himself, but they are not so generated from the Eternal Trinity as to have a Personality coequal with that of their Creator. They are the offspring of Divine Powers, but not the Divine Substance.

It might be suggested that the powers here addressed are the fallen angels to whom was given domination over this world of ours. The whole manifestation of God is as in angry power, the fury of the storm and the remembrance of the flood. This suits the word "Elim," which seems more difficult to interpret with reference to the holy angels than with reference to the idol powers who claimed worship from the heathen. The storm shows God's supremacy over the world where they sought to reign.

This also gives a special fitness to the position of the Psalm which from the judgements of mankind and the deliverance of the faithful in Ps. 28., proceeds to speak of the fallen angels. Every knee must bow to the Incarnate Son, of "things in Heaven and things on earth and things under the earth." It is in the beauty of holiness that God appears, and to Him they must bow down. So also in Ps. 96. 9. The worshipping earth is to be in pangs before Him in the consciousness of sin.

In Ps. 110. 3, "the beauties of holiness" imply the splendour of the attire of sanctity wherewith the worshippers are clothed.

If we interpret this Psalm of the powers of the nether world subdued by Messiah, it adds very much to the completeness of the cycle of thought, and prepares the way for the next Psalm, which speaks of the Redeemer as being drawn up from the midst of those powers.

The flood of Noah was a type of the destruction of the

powers of evil, as the Ark, which floated upon the waters, was a type of the Church of God, so that they who come to be built up therein (Ps. 28, 5) shall not be drawn away with the workers of iniquity.

The sevenfold Voice of God represents the action of the Spirit whereby the faithful are cleansed as well as the judicial manifestation whereby all that is high and lifted up in this sinful world must be overthrown.

PSALM 30.

THE TEMPLE OF HIS RISEN BODY

Trilogy of Redeemed Humanity

1. The Temple of His Risen Body (Ps. 30.).
2. The Divine Redeemer : Eternal Life in God (Ps. 31.).
3. The Blessedness of Renewal in Christ : a Meditation (Ps. 32.).

THE Psalmist praises God for "Thou hast drawn me up." He who deprecated going down into Sheol now rejoices in being raised out of it. He whose bones were vexed are healed. As He bore our sicknesses and sorrows, so He rejoices that He rises to be a principle of health to sin-stricken, death-stricken humanity.

It is a Psalm for the consecration of David's House, that is, the Temple of renewed humanity.

We have to recite this Psalm, remembering that we are the Body of Christ, the Temple of the Holy Ghost, separated in the Ark of God from the multitude that perish in His universal judgement. Jesus gives healing. The Holy Ghost lifts up into new life.

We must give thanks in celebrating Holy Eucharist, that we are "very members incorporate in His mystical Body," and so we look forward after the brief discipline of this sorrowful life to the morning of the Resurrection.

Our participation in the Divine Covenant must not, however, make us presumptuous. God's promises are sure,

but our stability is very apt to be shaken. How bold we are while things go well! How soon despondent when God hides His Face!

We think to glorify God while God glorifies us, and when He abases us we are apt to forget that that is the very way in which we are to glorify Him. "Great profit in my wealth! No profit in my death!" So we are apt to think in the blindness of mere human judgement. But the House of the Lord can only be consecrated through death. It is not of the world. We must die to the world.

There is a threefold appeal to Jehovah in the Psalmist's time of affliction, then a threefold appeal upon the return of prosperity.

The threefold appeal in verses 8 and 9 precedes the remembrance of having deprecated a descent into the pit which is recalled as an utterance of human feebleness from Ps. 6.

The thanksgiving for having earth's mourning and misery changed into elasticity and delight comes between the second and third appeals to Jehovah, because the glory which fills the risen Humanity of God, the Son, is the operation of the Holy Ghost.

This thanksgiving answers the previous enquiry. Human nature could see no profit in death. The mere death of manhood could have no result for good. It is the power of the Spirit who proceeds from the Son as from the Father which raised up the Body of Him that died. This makes Him to be a principle of justification, quickening those who believe in Him.

That Spirit changes all the sorrows of life into sources of joy no less for us than for Christ Himself. We are transformed by the Spirit of Christ as being members of the Body of Christ.

The object of our trial in this life is that we may praise God for ever. But how can we praise God? It is not of

ourselves. It is God's own glory within us which gives glory to Him. The Seventy translate "my glory" meaning "my soul." The Psalmist went deeper than that. He lost himself in God, and knew that none could praise God save as God used them for His praise. The creature can only praise God as God inspires him. Our nothingness can add nothing to the praise which He puts into our mouths, but it is our joy to utter it as He teaches us. "Thy words are sweet unto my throat, yea, sweeter than honey unto my mouth" (Ps. 119. 103).

PSALM 31.

THE DIVINE REDEEMER: ETERNAL LIFE IN GOD

THIS Psalm calls us to unite with Christ in His appeal to the Father. He interprets the "Jehovah" of verse 2 by that name of Divine relationship when upon the Cross He utters the first line of verse 6. We are called to share in the Divine relationship by having been made members of Him in whom the Godhead is Incarnate. He becomes to us the Way, as in the Divine glory He is the Truth, manifesting God, and the Life abiding with the Father. We look to Him as effecting our redemption, even as He effected His own, for the Father did not deliver Him by a superior power, but the Father welcomed His Spirit as being one with Himself in consubstantial life. The triumph over Satan was a work of Human endurance in Psalm 22. The redemption of humanity from Satan's bondage is a work of Divine power which Jesus now accomplishes for us at the Right Hand of the Father by the active fellowship of the Holy Ghost. In dying Christ asserts His Sonship, His Divine character. He is "declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection of the dead" (Rom. i. 4). He who trusted in this anointing Presence of the Divine nature bids

us not look to lying vanities, but to the anointing of the Holy Ghost, which we have received in Himself.

The Spirit of Divine Love "lifts us out of the hand of the enemy, and sets our feet in a large place," so must we "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free." "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes us free from the law of sin and of death."

In the next portion of the Psalm we have the humiliation of the Psalmist. As he bore affliction, being a type of Christ, so are we to share Christ's sufferings as being His members. Christ commends His Spirit to the Father, and pleads the scorn and antagonism of men which He has borne throughout His life. We must not shrink from the same when we are called to bear it. "He trusted in God," being Himself one with God. We must not doubt God's loving kindness. He is ready to make His face shine upon us, but we must call upon Him. It is the power of the Holy Ghost which enables us to pray to God so as not to be ashamed. Unless the Holy Ghost sustain us in the life of the Eternal Trinity we must bear the shame of the ungodly, for we are by nature one with them unless by grace we are one with Christ.

From the sufferings of Christ and of the Church militant we have to look up to the goodness of the Divine Treasures. How great, how forbearing, is God's loving kindness towards us, although we are so apt to mistrust it. The "fenced city" is the Church of God wherein we are new-born and sheltered by Divine grace.

That city is the Bride of Christ. His saints must love Him. This love is the life of that city. The Lord, the Spirit, "preserves faithfulness." They who are faithful experience the protection which He affords.

The last verse stands alone as an admonition to all who wait for the Lord.

PSALM 32.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF RENEWAL IN CHRIST:
A MEDITATION

THE Psalter began with a Beatitude Psalm. This Quindecad, and the Novena, which follows, close with one. All the three are of the nature of meditations.

As the first Quindecad closed with the beatific vision of the saint (Ps. 17.), so the second Quindecad closes with the felicitation of the penitent. It is a double felicitation—first, by reason of pardon; secondly, by the purity of the Christ-life.

The knowledge that God is our Redeemer must lead us to open-hearted acknowledgement of our sin. While we retain its burden upon ourselves, it is more than we can bear, but "happy is he whose transgression is taken away." So, then, the Psalmist says, "I will confess my transgression unto the Lord, and it is Thou who takest away the iniquity of my sin." Happy he whose sin is covered! Therefore I will not cover mine iniquity. If I cover it, I keep it, but if God "covers" it, He sets me free from it. If the Lord "reckons not iniquity," He purges the inmost soul from the taint of guile.

God is a covert from the ungodly. It is with His face that He covers us, the glory of His forthshining love (Ps. 31. 21). If, then, I would be safe when the great waters come upon me, I must be abiding in the Light of His countenance. What is hidden from Him is exposed to the violence of the enemy. His eye must be my guiding principle, if His redeeming power is to be my security. I must not be "like the brute beasts." Love must draw me to my loving Saviour. The sense of my necessity must make me trust in the Lord.

The Psalmist calls upon the faithful to rejoice along with Him.

The absence of any title makes a break separating off the remaining Psalms of Book I. There are nine of them.

These may be classed together as a Novena of Heavenly Worship. They seem to arrange themselves in three trilogies.

Trilogy of the Divine Sovereignty.

1. The Divine Life of the New Creation (Ps. 33.).
2. The Angel of the Covenant (Ps. 34.).
3. The Angel of Vengeance (Ps. 35.).

PSALM 33.

THE DIVINE LIFE OF THE NEW CREATION

THIS Psalm introduces the final Novena with a shout of triumph.

In Ps. 3. Messiah appears entering upon His struggle.

In Ps. 18. He is seen as a Divine Presence before which the Powers of Darkness are impotent, and the mysteries of the hidden world are set before us in succession, while He, the Creator, whose glory the heavens declare, goes forward as the Redeemer, and at length commends His Spirit into the Father's hands, so that He can proclaim to His redeemed ones the blessedness of pardon and purity while they abide in His life, following the loving guidance of His watchful eye.

In Ps. 33. we enter upon the consequences of this redemption. This Psalm follows the preceding one as in the Creed the Resurrection of the Flesh and the Life Everlasting follow the article of the Forgiveness of Sins.

The whole earth being full of righteousness is called to burst forth in a new song of praise. It is a new creation by the Word of the Lord, the same Word by

whom the heavens were made of old and the earth standing out of the water and in the water (2 Pet. iii. 5).

The whole creation partakes of the happiness proclaimed in Ps. 32. All mankind are blest in the seed of Abraham. The prerogative of the Jews is not forfeited, but merged in the glory which all nations are called to share. "Happy the gens whose God is the Lord, the people whom He hath chosen to be His inheritance." It is the fulfilment of the promise made to Messiah, "Desire of Me and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance." Other Psalms speak of the Jews in their unbelief falling down to the level of the heathen. This Psalm speaks of Gentiles along with Jews being raised to a higher glory than the old covenant could know.

God looked down of old (Ps. 14.) to see if there was one man who sought for God. Now He regards the whole race with delight restored by the Son of David. "The earth is full of the mercy of the Lord."

We are called to follow the guidance of God's eye in Ps. 32. Now it is our joy to know that God's eye is upon us to provide for all our needs.

The loving kindness descending from on high meets the upward regard of the expectant soul. So does the last verse set forth the sweet interchange of devotion between the redeemed and the Redeemer.

PSALM 34.

THE ANGEL OF THE COVENANT

THIS Psalm is referred to the time when David feigned madness, "marking the gates of Gath with crosses." By his conduct he typified our Lord's assuming the likeness of sinful flesh and dying upon the Cross. This furnishes a key to the Messianic intention of this Psalm.

In all our affliction we must learn to comfort others with the same consolation wherewith we ourselves are comforted of Christ. So the afflicted hear (verse 3) how the afflicted one was heard of God (verse 7).

In the first part of the Psalm, the nine occurrences of the name Jehovah may be taken in triplets. The latter part beginning with verse 12 is avowedly an instruction upon the fear of Jehovah. In this instruction there are six occurrences of the name. The face in anger against the wicked, the eyes and ears watchful for the needs of the righteous, constitute one triplet. Then in another triplet Jehovah is mentioned, saving those that are of a contrite spirit, delivering the righteous from all afflictions, setting free the souls of His servants, so that none who trust in Him shall be condemned. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 1).

The Angel of the Lord is mentioned in this Psalm and in the following. Here he appears as the defender of those that fear the Lord; there as the avenger of the Lord upon the rebellious.

This implies that those who fear the Lord are in a world of God's enemies. Although the new creation is so full of rejoicing for the righteous, nevertheless the people of God have a battle to carry on. The multitudes of men or the strength of the individual man, or the appliances of powers avail not. The security of the redeemed in the kingdom of Christ is that God sees them, to deliver their soul from death (Ps. 33. 19). And now we are told of the power whereby God helps us. "He sends His Angel" (Acts xii. 11). The Kingdom of Providence has powers which we see not, which depend for their co-operation upon our reverent obedience.

The Angel of the Lord is a Being superior to the ordinary angels to whose care we are entrusted. Apparently he stands alone. Probably in him we may recognize that mysterious Presence which was vouchsafed to the children of Israel which they were to reverence. "Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for My Name is in him" (Ex. xxiii. 21).

The children of Israel were to go forth and destroy the nations of the land who had incurred God's wrath. They were not to fear their superior strength, but were to rely upon the presence of the Angel of the Lord along with them.

He was in some respects a type, in some an anticipation, of Christ present with His Church. As the Israelites were to rely upon the security which this Angelic presence gave, so we are to go forth relying upon the living power of Christ, the Head of the Church.

Fitly, then, is this Angel of the Lord spoken of in this Trilogy of Heavenly Worship as belonging to the new creation wherein we who have been redeemed out of the Egypt of spiritual darkness are called to worship God through the mediation of Christ in the Church militant.

PSALM 35.

THE ANGEL OF VENGEANCE

THE same Angel is mentioned in this Psalm as in the preceding. But here it is as an Angel of Vengeance, "pursuing and thrusting down."

This Psalm speaks of the Jews as having now fallen under the judgement of the Angel who was given to be their protector. He must pursue them with the vengeance which had been threatened. For sinning against his presence there could be no pardon.

This Psalm, then, must have its completeness in the rejection of the Jews for not accepting Messiah.

This Psalm does not indicate any desire on David's part for vengeance upon Saul. David said to Saul: "The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee" (1 Sam. xxiv. 12). In accordance with that utterance David looks for God to avenge him, but this, in his case, was not the desire of an angry spirit. It was the necessary expression of his faith. As the Apostolic ministry is a savour of death unto death besides being a savour of life unto life, or rather in consequence of being so, just similarly, David could not rise up to the acceptance of his own Divine vocation without being conscious that he was to be avenged by God upon Saul and upon all his enemies, and even though his enemy were his own son, his favourite son, he was obliged to choose the side of God and look for the vengeance to follow. Had he not risen up to such Divine pronouncement, he would have fallen short of his own Divine probation. Personally, he was ever tender towards his oppressor. But he had to represent the Divine vengeance which should be exerted by Messiah against those who would not accept the Incarnate Son of God, that presence which the Angel of the earlier covenant guaranteed both for protection and for responsibility.

This Psalm is associated with Ps. 22., and therefore with our crucified Saviour, by the phrase "all my bones." In His anguish He could "number all His bones" (Ps. 22. 18). Now he says "that all his bones cry out to God, who delivers the afflicted from him that is stronger outwardly than he" (verse 10).

How we learn from this Psalm the lesson of love to enemies! We must not think to show charity by

softening down the Divine anathema which we must utter against all who profane our holy faith, but we are to do so by rising up to the fulness of self-sacrificing devotion.

The Angel of the Lord is only mentioned in these two Psalms, but we may observe that he is mentioned three times (Ps. 34. 8; 35. 5, 6). Thus we have an indication of the Triune glory which he enshrines.

Trilogy of the Faithful People

1. The Expectation of the Meek (Ps. 36.).
2. The Patience of the Saints (Ps. 37.).
3. The Confidence of the Sin-Bearer (Ps. 38.).

PSALM 36.

THE EXPECTATION OF THE MEEK

FROM the Trilogy of the Divine Sovereignty we proceed to that of the faithful people. The new earth, the Kingdom of Grace, with the Angel of the Covenant protecting the faithful and pursuing the ungodly, is the home of God's people. The evil world is still round about. The ungodly do not believe in the Holy Catholic Church as a living spiritual organization. Because they see things outwardly going on as if God cared not, they deny God's government. Sin has such possession of them that their maxim is, "Whatever my heart desireth that will I do."

They know not that "the goodness of God is drawing them to repentance" (Rom. ii. 3). As they do not love God, they do not hate evil. Their only measure of right or wrong is by the outward and immediate results to themselves of what they choose to do.

But we must consider God's love—"the breadth, the length, the depth, and the height" (Eph. iii. 18). Its height is to the heavens, its faithfulness universal and

unerring, from the clouds of sunrise to those of western darkness, enduring in its length from age to age as the strong mountains, and strict in judgement, searching into the lowest depths.

If we would know God aright, we must know the pricelessness of His redeeming mercy (Ps. 49. 9), and fly for refuge to the wings of the sanctifying Spirit Whom Messiah makes to renew the face of His people. This is the true refuge for the sons of men, as announced in Ps. 2. "This life is the light of men."

Thus does the regenerate soul look to the new creation as waiting to be manifested. God's mercy will continue for such as have here looked to Him by faith. At present we see the evil exalted and ruling the earth with self-confidence (Ps. 12. 9). In this new world the workers of mischief will be thrust down by the Angel of Vengeance, and the meek shall inherit the earth (Ps. 35. 6).

PSALM 37.

THE PATIENCE OF THE SAINTS

THE proud walk by sight. The faithful know the unseen as a real sphere of life. "They seek a city which hath foundations, built by God's love."

Their inheritance is sure. They inherit a country which shall not fail them. "Truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned: but now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. ii. 15, 16).

So must we, with the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, not apply the words of the ancient promise in a Christian sense, as a subsequent adaptation, but recognize the faith of the earlier covenant, looking

through the promises of the outer and perishing earth to the heavenly country which was kept in store by the Creator of this world as the object of hope, and eventually the sphere of fruition, to His faithful people. The outer world was not, and is not, intended to satisfy God's people. It contains within itself evidences of God's love, which lead them to trust Him for gracious gifts in the future without disquieting themselves by reason of the evils of the present time.

If Abraham was content to look forward in confidence that his posterity would enjoy the land of promise four hundred years after his death, it plainly was no earthly ambition which made him glad. The attainment of the land of promise in which he personally could have no share, was plainly but a step towards the attainment of that home with God on high where he would gather his posterity to himself, that all together might rejoice in the Eternal Blessing. So it was that he looked through the period of promised earthly rule to that great Seed which should be born when the time was fully come. A larger, a better, a heavenly, country rose up before his mind, belonging to his own descendant as the Son of God and the Heir of all things. He rejoiced to see the day of Christ and was glad (John viii. 56). The earthly fulfilment was not by him set aside that the heavenly might take its place, but it was an intermediate object of contemplation containing within itself the germs of that future manifestation by which the promise should attain its true and perfect spiritual fulfilment.

David, in like manner, looked through earthly things to heavenly, and in saying this Psalm so must we.

We ought, however, to realize more than those who were before Christ could possibly do, that earthly things are the media of future spiritual blessings, not by the enjoyment which they bring, but by the suffering which

they occasion, so that the more we have in this world of death, the more we have to die to. The only value of God's gifts is that we may make them an instrument of sacrifice to Him, and so of closer communion and deeper joy. The early fathers had the hope of eternal life, but we have the fuller knowledge of the death unto sin whereby we enter into that hope. What was to them a penalty patiently to be borne, is to us itself a promise of the highest kind, so that we can rejoice in tribulations as we rejoice in God.

PSALM 38.

THE CONFIDENCE OF THE SIN-BEARER

THIS Psalm is "for remembrance." It is used annually on the Day of Atonement in the synagogue.

The "memorial," however, rather refers to the meat-offering, and so this Psalm is identified with the Eucharist offered in remembrance of Christ, the memorial of the Christian Sacrifice.

This Psalm was evidently written in a time of severe bodily sickness, and David felt his sickness to be a real penalty for his sin. It seems to have been some retirement from public business, occasioned by such a trouble, which led to the rebellion of Absalom, and gave him the opportunity of saying that the king, unable to attend to his duties in person, had also failed to appoint any one to see to them for him.

As in the preceding Psalm he was content to look forward to a land unseen, so in this Psalm he is willing to abide in the assurance of God's love, whatever chastening God may assign to him. The reproaches of his neighbours did not move him. Yet it was not in churlish indifference that he remained proudly aloof. He felt himself to be a sinner. He looked for God to deliver him,

for he knew God was pledged to do so. He was the servant of the Lord, and relied upon his Master to accomplish his salvation, that he might not perish in those sins which weighed him down. Penitence did not crush him with despondency, but stimulated him to greater faith.

This Psalm of confidence under Divine chastisement follows properly after the Psalm which speaks of the pride of the worldling (Ps. 36.), and the prosperity whereby he seems so often to have the advantage over the saint. It is not a mere casualty if so it is. The saint is being trained by God to live in this world with a simple expectation of future blessing, not as a thing future, but as an object which he must now grasp by faith, so that appropriating its truth in this time of discipline, he may enter into the fulness of salvation when his "Master" sees that his discipline is complete.

So does this trilogy lead on to the Trilogy of the Acceptable Sacrifice, which is the closing idea of Book I. Messiah came to be the Conqueror of Satan and to give Himself as a Sacrifice to the glory of God.

A new earth springs into being for the redeemed (Ps. 33.).

Angels wait around those who are the heirs of salvation (Ps. 34.).

Antichrist seems to triumph, but overthrow awaits him, and the faithful rejoice in God's love (Ps. 35.).

Their life is a contrast to the boastful self-confidence of the ungodly who rejoice in things that perish (Ps. 36.).

The faithful live a martyr life in the world, testifying to the Truth (Ps. 37.).

They have to bear much suffering that by Divine chastisement they may be purified in union with Christ. So shall they claim by faith the blessedness with which the Book closes (Ps. 41.) through union with Him, the Man of Blessedness, who was set forth at the beginning of all (Ps. 1. 2), as blessed in Himself, and the true blessing of all that trust in Him (Ps. 38.).

Thus we come to the Trilogy of the Acceptable Sacrifice.

Trilogy of the Acceptable Sacrifice

1. Human Nothingness as experienced by the Incarnate Word (Ps. 39.).
2. The Body prepared for Personal Self-Oblation (Ps. 40.).
3. The Blessedness of recognizing by Faith the chosen One of God (Ps. 41.).

PSALM 39.

HUMAN NOTHINGNESS AS EXPERIENCED BY THE INCARNATE WORD

THE Psalmist, distressed at the exaltation of the ungodly, kept silence (Ps. 37.). He humbled himself under God's chastening (Ps. 38.). But now he cries out that Jehovah may make him know the number of his days.

Why should we be eager about the things of earthly life when life itself is so brief! A shadow! An empty breath! How men fume and foam in their desires, and yet when they have acquired what they want, there is nothing that they can keep.

Ps. 17. contrasted the perishing character of earthly things which men could only "leave to their babes" with the enjoyment of "the Divine likeness" which would be the portion of the faithful soul in the day of resurrection.

This Psalm contemplates the vanity of all earthly things in themselves, and the uncertainty of what may happen to them. Even when we succeed in producing we cannot make sure of possessing.

The Psalmist, therefore, acknowledges that he must live for God alone. "My hope is in Thee." The troubles of the world do not come by chance. We must accept them as due to us for our sin, and we must humble ourselves before God, that we perish not. There is nothing else to live for. "Man is but a breath."

So he ends with a supplication to God to exercise towards him the kindness of a host under whose roof he lodges as a stranger. He looks for God's help, but not as he would look to an earthly power. God's greatness is such that He must hide Himself if man is to rejoice in Him. St Peter said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke v. 8). So now the Psalmist feels the glory of God as an aggravation of his own weak and miserable condition. He does not desire that God should look away from him in anger or neglect. He cannot gaze upon God's glory and live, but if God looks away, he will look up to God and experience the joy of faith, knowing that God, whose guest he is in this perishing world, is calling him onward. The joy of God's countenance will be his delight when he comes to that life where the transient claims of hospitality shall be changed into the eternal intimacy of filial love.

This verse anticipates what our Lord says, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you" (John xvi. 7). So the Psalmist does not desire the mere continuance of natural life in the experience of God's bounty, but the elevation of spiritual life in the fruition of the Divine nature, that he may "go hence and be no more" because God had taken him to Himself.

It is the human side of the hope with which Ps. 17. closed. There he looked to the Divine transformation when he should wake from death to see God. Here he accepts the death which is the end of human life and the necessary preliminary to that glory which he longs to find in the Eternal life of the Divine vision.

PSALM 40.

THE BODY PREPARED FOR PERSONAL
SELF-OBLATION

MAN was created in weakness, but he was created for the Divine acceptance. He had to be proved in his weakness before that acceptance could be vouchsafed. Forty is the number of trial, and therefore the fortieth Psalm represents to us the weakness of man as being in due time perfected and approved, so that he may give himself a living sacrifice to Jehovah.

Man was waiting for Jehovah. He had had his trial in Eden and had failed. He still was called to serve God, but now he had to wait for God to give him the power. He was in the miry swamp of corruption, sin, and death. He waited now for Jehovah to raise him out of this state, and that could only be if Jehovah came to him. God sent His Son. Now, therefore, there was a new song put into man's mouth, a new song fitting a new creation (Ps. 33. 3).

The surrender of our weakness to God is contrasted with the sufficiency of the proud who trust in themselves and live for themselves. There can be no happiness for man except what was declared in Psalm 1., viz. in recognizing the law of his Creator. To do this involves the entire oblation of the whole self to God, and so it is here set forth as the sacrifice which God requires.

To rely upon God absolutely, as we are bound to do if we rely upon Him at all, involves an entire detachment from all else with a perfect confidence in His disposal of us. To have nothing, but to live for God, is to have all. Our needs are His creation, and if we know His love, we can trust in that love for their supply. God's purposes for us are altogether beyond our conception. By the discipline through which He leads us, He is con-

ducting us to ends that are beyond nature. He has formed us for Himself.

The favour of God, therefore, is not to be bought by any sacrifices such as the heathen offered to their gods. Love is the bond between God and man, and love does not admit of any substituted oblation. Love listens to the voice of the beloved one, and the loving heart welcomes the voice. So the Psalmist waited for Jehovah and acknowledges this as his own special dignity. God has given him "ears." He has not got merely to fulfil the law of an unapproachable Sovereign, but he has ears with which to listen for His voice. When he hears that voice, he comes forward at once to do God's command. This is no grudging service but a work of supreme delight. "I delight to do Thy will, O my God."

This entire loss of self in readiness to do the will of God is the true idea of sacrifice. The sacrifices offered in the Tabernacle were of no avail except as expressing this entire self-surrender. The death of the victim implied the unworthiness of the offerer, tainted by sin. The victim died because God was not satisfied. The sacrificial system of the law pointed onward to a victim whom God really could accept in the fulness of love. He would offer Himself wholly to God, dying to the world, but in so dying He would still live to God. He, therefore, is the true, the perfect Man.

The Psalmist speaks as being identified with Him. This is the true happiness. The Book began with meditating upon God's law. It ends with doing it.

He who is the acceptable Victim approaches God in the righteousness of God. This, then, is the Gospel which he has to publish. So he fulfils his vow as set forth in Ps. 22. 26. "From Thee is my praise in the great congregation." He will publish in the great congregation what God has done in that He has answered him.

To be accepted with God is to live with the life of God. The Psalmist cannot shut up the Divine Life. If he is accepted, he must make it known. He does not boast of God as something that he has won. He loses himself in God, and praises God before all for that which God has done.

Thus it is that God's compassions are perpetuated to him. If he could be silent respecting them they would be withdrawn. He has a receptive nature—ears to learn God's will. He has a declarative nature—a voice to proclaim God's goodness. The voice is the distinguishing characteristic of humanity. Man alone has an interior consciousness of God's goodness. His voice is given him to make that goodness known.

Sacrifice, therefore, necessarily issues in thanksgiving. We do not give to God what we have and what we are, except by acknowledging that all is from Him, that it belongs to Him. His glory fills our ear, our heart, our lips. We live thereby. To die to earth and live in God is to find life and to escape from death. Evils past number filled this sinful world from which we escape. As God takes us to Himself, He fills us with the glory of His life.

So does the Psalmist look up to Jehovah. He could not thus approach God except in virtue of the covenanted relation which that name implies. The following verses will be repeated Elohistically in another place (Ps. 70.), but here they sum up the blessedness of the covenant of the law by which God could be approached as Jehovah. All enemies who see him thus welcomed by Jehovah must be ashamed. All who seek Jehovah will acknowledge that God is glorified by this wonderful display of His loving kindness, this great salvation.

The Psalmist waits for God to lift up His sacrifice to Heaven as Elijah waited for the answer of fire to be given

at the time of the Evening Sacrifice. That was the hour of Christ's death. Our sacrifice in like manner must be kindled with heavenly fire by the Sacrifice of Christ. The "Sacrifice of Righteousness" is lifted up to Heaven because it has a heavenly life which earthly death only serves to manifest. Mankind had to wait for this ere any acceptable sacrifice could be given. We have to look to it and call forth its virtue in ourselves, that we may find acceptance through its power, when we give ourselves to God.

PSALM 41.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF RECOGNIZING BY FAITH THE CHOSEN ONE OF GOD

THE Book began with two Psalms expressive of happiness, the first for him that walked in the law of the Lord, the second for him that took refuge in Messiah.

It closes with two Psalms of a similar character, the fortieth for him that gave himself up as a sacrifice to the Lord, and relied upon the Divine Power, the forty-first for him that recognizes the power of the Lord in His helpless and suffering condition. This condition is the external law of Christ in His own earthly ministry, and in His saints.

Love and honour to God in our brethren is the test of love and honour to God as our own portion. The Psalms thus anticipate the teaching of the New Testament. "This is His commandment, that we should believe on the Name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment" (1 John iii. 3).

The Jews failed of recognizing the glory of God abstractedly in the poor and needy. Consequently, they

rejected God when He appeared amongst them in the form of One poor and needy. This is the warning given in Ps. 41., and then again in Ps. 82. Had they yielded to the claims of justice in one that was poor and needy, they would have been saved from their profanation of the Incarnate God. That Psalm to which Christ appeals as supplying evidence which justified His claim to be the Son of God, spake of the Jews as forfeiting the glory of their predestination because they did not recognize the Divine claim of justice on behalf of the helpless and poor.

The Sacrifice which Messiah alone could offer in its integrity so as to claim the happiness of Ps. 40., has to be accepted by faith, so that we, recognizing God in Christ, may have the happiness proclaimed in Ps. 41.

We may notice the threefold pledge of deliverance by Jehovah given in the opening verses. The Father will deliver him in the day of evil. The Lord the Redeemer will preserve him and keep him alive, for he that believeth in Christ shall not die eternally, neither shall his enemies, the Powers of Darkness, swallow him up. The sanctifying Spirit will support him when earthly power seems to fail.

The protection of God is heightened, and indeed manifested, by the contrast of human unfaithfulness. What has he done for God? Nothing! Yet God thus watches over him. How much has He done for man! Yet the only return is ingratitude and treachery. Blessed is the experience of man's ingratitude which enables the faithful soul to accept the blessing of God as shining out in the midst of it with Divine Power.

He who would give himself a sacrifice to God after the law of self-oblation in Ps. 40., must not look for the return of any earthly consolation. He must welcome earthly rejection as the means of self-surrender. We

have not parted with self while we are dependent on any earthly return of gratitude, or sensitive to any earthly disappointments. We have to rise out of all earthly disappointment, not into the churlish apathy of pride, but into the joyous experience of the all-satisfying love of God.

To this the Psalmist looks. "Lord have pity on me and raise me up, that I may requite them!" How? Not by vindictive antagonism. They truly had returned to him evil for good, and hatred for his good-will (Ps. 35. 12), but he, when raised up from sickness, would continue to do as aforetime, when for their necessities "he humbled his soul with fasting." He who had given himself up to God would triumph over them by the exercise of Divine power for their benefit, not for their hurt.

We are not to think that there is any lingering malice in the Psalmist's prayer inconsistent with the highest aspirations of Christian love. God forbid! Would that Christians knew what it was to give up self to God according to the sacrificial law of Ps. 40! Then they would know how to bear the rebuffs of earthly trouble with the Divine calmness of Ps. 41.

By the troubles of earth which he has to bear the Psalmist knows that God has accepted him. He can thank God for them. "In all these we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us" (Rom. viii. 37).

So the Book ends, as Ps. 17. ended, and Ps. 32. also, with the transcendent joy of a life transformed, instructed, tranquillized, in the reciprocal gaze of Divine love.

BOOK II

As we pass on to Book II., we find that the number Fifteen still asserts its pre-eminence.

First: in the numerical ordering. Ps. 45., the third Fifteenth tells of the Son of God assuming our nature in a glorious manner with a welcome of poetic adoration corresponding to the encomium of the first Fifteenth. That Psalm told of His moral dignity in our nature, whereby He was fitted to ascend the throne of God. This Psalm tells of His Divine origin whereby He possessed that earthly fitness. The earthly fitness is the manifestation of the Divine Sonship of Messiah, and the factor, Three, is the symbol of Divinity.

Then, again, Ps. 60. proclaims Messiah's final victory. It is the Psalm of the restitution of all things when Christ, triumphing over His enemies, gathers His people round Himself under the glorious banner of the Cross. Four is the number telling of the world and of the Cross, and this is the fourth Fifteenth.

But, beside this, the number Fifteen stands prominent in this Book, for the central portion consists of fifteen Psalms ascribed to David.

There are, first of all, nine Psalms, eight belonging to the sons of Korah and one to Asaph. At the end are seven concluding Psalms separated off because the first two are anonymous. Between these comes the Davidic central group. This seems to indicate the relation of

the Book to the Eternal Trinity. The number Thirty-one is the special number of Godhead, and this Book is Elohist. $El=31$. The three numbers, Nine, Fifteen, and Seven, are symbolic in Holy Scripture of the Three Divine Persons respectively. As Book I. sets forth the human probation and sacrifice of Christ, so Book II. seems to set forth His Divine relationships, the power of the Divine nature whereby He acted in our manhood. The forty-second Psalm comes like the forty-second generation in St Matthew's Gospel. Forty generations, and no man found worthy to be the Redeemer! Forty Psalms and Jesus accepted as the Offering wherein the Father delights. One more generation to set apart the foster-father of the Incarnate Son! One more Psalm to tell of the blessedness of those who, like Joseph, acknowledge the Incarnate God with trustful faith! In the forty-second Psalm as in the forty-second generation from Adam, the Son of God appears upon the earth, seeming, as it were, an exile from the heavenly glory. He comes to learn in human nature, and to make known to us, what the thirst of man for God should be. Jordan separates Him by outward mystery from the glory which is His own true Birthright, the heavenly Jerusalem.

Book II. begins with an octave by the sons of Korah. Apparently the Psalmist writes in the name of the king, when David was far away in exile. The king was like an exile, and yet the glory of the kingdom centred in his personality. So does the glory of Heaven centre in Jesus even while He submits Himself to our earthly conditions of outward life, not thinking to claim on earth those surroundings of power which befitted Him as co-equal with the Father.

The Korahites symbolize the faithful among the Jews who share Christ's exile by faithful self-surrender.

They symbolize the Christian Church and write their

psalms in David's name, as the Church militant addresses God in the name, the Personal Headship, of Christ. They write not for themselves but for Him. Our true prayer is not for ourselves but for Christ.

Book II. therefore opens with three trilogies in which is set before us the acceptable character of the Divine victim.

The Trilogy of Exile and Sorrow (Pss. 42.-44.).
The Trilogy of Divine Fellowship (Pss. 45.-47.).
The Trilogy of Consummation (Pss. 48.-50.).

PSALM 42.

MESSIAH THIRSTING FOR THE DIVINE MANIFESTATION

MAN was created for God, to live in the joy of the Divine life. By sin he has fallen under the dominion of death. He is thus an exile on the other side of Jordan. The Hermons and Mizar represent this present world.

Messiah has to empty Himself of the glory proper to His humanity by the hypostatic union, and He has to share our state of exile.

Not only so. The carnal Israel is fallen back into a state of alienation, although God has called Israel to a glorious predestination. Mount Zion, degraded by carnal bondage, is become even as the hills of the heathen, so that the true David coming to His own inheritance is as a stranger amongst them. He comes in the power of the predestination. The predestinated family of Abraham are living in earthly bondage. But the Messianic promises are not to be fulfilled by bringing God down to an earthly manifestation such as will satisfy their carnal hearts. Zion must be elevated to a heavenly fruition. Zion is greater than Bashan by heavenly vocation, but she must rise by that vocation

to Messiah's true throne, which is the heavenly one. "O thou Evangelistress, Zion, get thee up into the high mountain" (Isa. xl. 9). The local Zion witnesses the beginning but not the completion of David's promises. Our new Joshua has a greater Jordan to pass than that of old.

We must see, then, that we really feel our state of exile in this present world. It is only in proportion as we feel the exile that we can know the sweetness of Messiah's fellowship.

We do not thirst for God! Alas! We lack the Divine life. We could not have a real thirst for God were it not for the Divine grace leading us. The dead body cannot thirst. Much less can the dead soul thirst for God. The thirst of the lost soul is not a thirst for God, although it does indeed arise from the nature of man which was formed to drink of God's pleasures as out of a river. The dead soul has a capacity of thirst by reason of the nature which has died, but that which should have been its satisfaction only nauseates it. The dead soul thirsts for the dead world and its delights.

It is a terrible thing when the soul has no thirst for God. It shows that it has no real life.

While the soul is thus conscious of Divine need it can find no nourishment in the world. Its only food is tears. Its life is penitence, and will so remain until the vision of God be attained. Its sorrow is that of which the world knows nothing and the world cannot alleviate it.

Nevertheless the longing is not an aching despair, but a confident hope. The greater the hope the greater the longing. God is the health of our countenance. We cannot know what true health is save in proportion as we attain to behold Him.

PSALM 43.

THE EXILE IN EXPECTATION

THIS Psalm is evidently a continuation of the previous one. The threefold desire expresses the relation of the Human Soul of Christ to the Three Persons of the Godhead. He appeals here for the leading of the Holy Spirit wherewith He is anointed. By the Holy Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God.

This Psalm is evidently a continuation of Ps. 42., but it is anonymous. It is the Psalm of those who are not only sharers with Christ in earthly need, but have also lost their own name, and are one with Christ by dying to the world. They worship as being dead to the world with Him who is gone hence, so as to present the sacrifice on their behalf in the world of the departed.

How beautifully, therefore, is this Psalm for the purpose to which the Church has so long applied it, as introductory to the Holy Communion. It is our Lord's own Introit. The Psalm which follows is like the prayer for the Church militant in her continuous state of suffering for Christ's sake.

PSALM 44.

THE SONG OF THE REDEEMED AMIDST OUTWARD DERELICTION

THEY who have entered into the sorrows of Christ's Passion can appeal with unshaken faith when they are called themselves to suffer. Such suffering is a part of the mystery of a life united with the Incarnate God.

Suffering belonged to the ancient people of God. The Egyptian bondage was foretold to Abraham. The position of the chosen Land of Promise exposed them to suffering at the hands of the two great empires on either

side. When the internal division came, Judah was still feeble in comparison with the schismatical kingdom which had forfeited the Divine promises. They suffered for Christ, but Christ was always their Deliverer. They never obtained deliverance by outward strength. Divine manifestations called them to a life of faith. Their original victory was a work of Divine power, and it would have been more complete if they had been more faithful, trusting in the Divine command. God had for them a Divine purpose, and consequently He wished to train them to supernatural reliance upon Himself. The hope of Messiah was what ensured them salvation. So it was to this that prophets pointed them in times of difficulty, as Isaiah pointed Ahaz to the inalienable hope of Israel. The "Right Hand" of the Lord could not be withdrawn from them.

The Psalmist pleads with God because of present difficulty. It seems to be a scandal for them to be thus brought low in the presence of the heathen.

Why is it? God suffers His people to be brought low in order that He may show His power in their deliverance. We have to bear the shame for a little while. The glory will be given in the end.

What is the condition of deliverance? We must accept the humiliation.

The same law holds good for the people of Christ now as for those who looked forward to Christ of old. God does not work mightily with His people by giving them this world's strength. In proportion to the overthrow shall be the deliverance if we have faith sufficient to bear the trial. We must rise up to the emergency by accepting the discipline. We must acknowledge God's love in our humiliation as much as in our glory. Our glory might seem to be an evidence to the world outside, but indeed it would be no true evidence. Our faith

must recognize God's love just as much in the sorrow as in the triumph. Until we have learnt by faith to look to God within ourselves we cannot look to see His power manifested round about.

The Cross must precede the Resurrection. The victory of faith cannot be a victory accomplished by natural development. The heel of the Conqueror must be bruised before any can claim to share the victory wherein the head of the serpent is to be trodden under foot. Outward difficulties do not separate us from the love of Christ. On the contrary, St Paul says that it is just by means of them that we become conquerors. (Rom. viii. 36).

This Psalm then calls us specially to claim our part in the Sacrifice of Christ as a law of life, without which, indeed, it were useless to look to it as a ground of confidence. We must be crucified with Him.

It may be noticed how Ps. 44. corresponds with the first half of Ps. 22. The numerical relationship is remarkable.

It is a song of faith during a time of deep trouble. It expresses a faith which looks beyond the mere resignation of penitence. It is faith made perfect by love, ready to suffer if only God may be glorified. It is the song of those who are on the other side of the great Jordan along with their King who came to suffer. They accept the suffering as a token that God has not cast them off. They accept the suffering as a token that God will raise them up.

We must remember that this law of faithful trial belongs to us equally in our individual and our collective relationship to Christ, as individuals, as Churches, and as the Church at large. Overthrow must always precede victory.

In this Trilogy of Exile and Sorrow we have Christ

and His people looking forward to deliverance from the world. As in Ps. 22. we had the personal human suffering of Christ, so now we have the Divine character of Messiah shining out amidst the sufferings which He shares with His covenanted people in the land beyond Jordan, where they are found in a state of exile. David's throne seems to be forfeited, but the faithful sons of Korah know that it is sure.

1. Messiah thirsting for the Divine Manifestation (Ps. 42.).
2. The Exile's Confident Expectation of Acceptance (Ps. 43.).
3. The Faithful People waiting in outward Dereliction undisturbed (Ps. 44.).

The state of the Church must make the virgins watch for the coming of the Bridegroom. So, also, must times of individual temptation quicken our watchfulness. The Bridegroom, however, is at hand. Fellowship in suffering shall give way to fellowship in joy. The Trilogy of Divine Fellowship follows.

1. The Hero Bridegroom coming to redeem (Ps. 45.).
2. The Joyful Song of the Church militant (Ps. 46.).
3. The Invitation of the Church Catholic (Ps. 47.).

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PSALM 45.

THE MARRIAGE SONG OF THE LAMB

THE Psalm of the heavenly nuptials fitly follows the Trilogy of Suffering. The Son of God comes forth to wed our humanity. This Psalm sets forth the hidden glory of the predestined humanity; the glory of the humanity abiding in the predestinating chamber of Divine foreknowledge until the warrior King comes forth to espouse His Bride and set her free from the bondage of Satan which held her prisoner.

This Psalm is inscribed "on lilies." Lilies, whether in textile fabric or sculpture, symbolized the beauty

of the greater Temple, the purity of the humanity of Christ as assumed into His Divine Personality, and extended in His Church. The new Jerusalem is the Bride of Christ, the city wherein God dwells, His "lovely tabernacles." This Psalm is "a song of lovely things," that which God loves.

Ps. 84. is a human response to this love, praising the loveliness which the Divine indwelling gives to this chosen Temple. The object of God's love was truly worthy of that love by the Divine Ideal which it embodied. It must rise to the worthiness of that love in living truth by loving Him.

The expectant Heavens call upon the Son of God to come forth and lead the Church militant to the victory which the sword of the Spirit enables the manhood to accomplish.

As we sing this Psalm we must feel how the power of that Spirit strengthens us to conquer in our own individual difficulties. Our victory is not ours but His. We have to assert the triumphant character of His Kingdom. The gates of hell cannot prevail against the Son of God, whose members we are.

We go forth to meet our individual temptations in the spicy fragrance of the merits of Christ's grave. We must forget the earthly flesh if we would claim to act as the Bride of Christ. The humanity of Christ was quite distinct from all natural ties by reason of the Divine life. So must we be distinct. We must die to those natural ties which hinder the perfect fellowship of His Divine life. We must always live as the virgins following the Queen. We are taken away from all considerations except those in which the glorious humanity of Christ can identify us with itself.

So does the humanity of Christ live on in His Church from age to age. By Apostolical gifts of grace a new

race is formed, who are "counted unto the Lord for a generation," having in themselves the supernatural power of the Incarnate Word, the Head of the Body.

PSALM 46.

THE SONG OF THE CHURCH MILITANT

AS in Ps. 44. the Church poured forth her cry of distress, inasmuch as she has to suffer in her warfare through human weakness, so now she praises Christ, her Head, for the security of His Divine grace. This is the song of the virgins who follow Christ. So it is to be sung upon Alamothe. It is the song of the high aspirations which belong to virginal faith.

The heavenly Jerusalem rejoices in the presence of the Lamb. Therefore there can be no fear. We have a kingdom which cannot be moved. "God extends peace to her as a river." The waters of Baptismal grace flow forth from the sanctuary of God in her midst, and she feels herself secure amidst all the shakings of the world. The earth, whose oppression she feels and whose trouble she shares, will pass away, but she remains unharmed by reason of Immanuel. Though the waters threaten to drown, they cannot rise above the neck (Isa. viii. 8). Immanuel is her Head, and no water of outward desolation can reach to Him with whose life she lives.

We must see that we are abiding in the God of Jacob as our strong tower. We rejoice in the river of His grace like Siloah whose waters, flowing softly, secure Jerusalem from thirst in time of siege (Isa. viii. 6). The people may rage but He is our high tower.

We must wait for Him to show His judgements throughout the world, and if we know Him as our God, we shall be abiding safely in His love. When He

punishes the world with everlasting destruction, "He will be glorified in His saints" (2 Thess. i. 9, 10), for He is our high tower.

PSALM 47.

THE INVITATION OF THE CHURCH CATHOLIC

JERUSALEM is no longer the earthly city. She is exalted by the indwelling of God. The nations of the world acknowledge the supremacy of the heavenly Jerusalem. God has ordained for her a heritage of glory. He who came down to assume our humanity as His Bride, His Temple, is now gone up with a merry shout, and from the heavenly height He reigns over all the earth in "Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of us all." There shall He exert the promised sovereignty which belongs to Him as David's Son, the Head of the covenanted people, so that all the nations of the world may be blessed in the Seed of Abraham.

This leads us to the Trilogy of Consummation.

1. The City of God in the Completeness of her Predestination (Ps. 48.).
2. The Doom of the Nations of the Earth (Ps. 49.).
3. The Sacrifice of Jubilee (Ps. 50.).

PSALM 48.

THE CITY OF GOD IN THE COMPLETENESS OF
HER PREDESTINATION

THIS is a triumphant ode in praise of the New Jerusalem. She has the glory of God and is herself built so as to set forth the praise of God continually. "Her walls are salvation and her gates are praise." That praise is praise for continual deliverance (Isa. lx. 18.).

Apparently the Psalm belongs to the time of

Jehoshaphat, which suits both the reference to invading kings who turned away in despair and to the shipwreck by which the fleet of Jehoshaphat himself was destroyed.

Mount Zion is called to be a joy of the whole world, the Catholic Church. Her security is in God. If she trusts in God He will deliver. If she trusts in worldly power, His unseen power can destroy all.

Whatever fears and reverses may come, God will not suffer any part of her to be injured. Her glory is greater than can be realized here. The warfare of the world and the distresses of Ps. 44. have not destroyed any element of her beauty or security. God, who was with the trans-Jordanic exiles in Ps. 42., will be the guide of His Church through death.

PSALM 49.

THE DOOM OF THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH, AS NOT HAVING A REDEEMER

MESSIAH as the Divine King will guide His people safely "through death." He comes from God, and so He can lead His people to Heaven. "No man can ascend to Heaven but He that came down from Heaven" (John iii. 13). No power of the world therefore will avail to redeem any soul. "No man can redeem his brother." The wealth of this world reaches not to the work of redemption. However much men may boast themselves, death is too strong for them. He perishes like the beasts of the earth. His wealth passes to his heirs, but he has no home in Heaven. The people of God have a home with their heavenly Father. They have a Divine Redeemer who gives them life so that they perish not in Sheol. They who lorded it over them here on earth have no power to hurt, but pass away into the darkness. They have no continuance

and no understanding. They do not understand what God will do for them that seek Him. The people of God pass away and triumph over their enemies in the morning of the resurrection. God takes them to the heavenly Zion, and that is the city of everlasting light.

Thus the sons of Korah, representing the faithful of the Old Covenant, recognize the Divine glory which is the true object of faith, as necessitating a Divine Redeemer, altogether distinct from what would gratify the natural desires and expectations of the human heart.

Now Asaph, the Seer, takes up the strain.

The series of Asaphite Psalms begins with a glorious preparatory trumpet blast in the great Psalm of Jubilee.

The Asaphite Psalms are remarkable for their affectionate regard towards the family of Joseph, *i.e.* of Rachel, the true mother of the chosen Israel, the first beloved. She symbolizes the predestined Humanity. The family of Leah belong to the order of natural precedence, but Reuben's sin gave back the privilege of primogeniture to the younger brother, who was Rachel's son. Hence the sovereignty was restored to Joseph in Egypt, though as yet it could only be upon probation. It was a typical sovereignty. From this probationary elevation Ephraim fell. Then David was called to the headship of Israel. Predestination in his case supersedes probation.

This call, accordingly, was not brought about as in Joseph's case by the over-ruling of Providence, but by the express word of prophecy. It was therefore not given on probation only, but by an inalienable covenant. David's offspring might fall away for a time, but God had chosen David so that in the end the posterity of David should receive the Kingdom, not by natural merit

but by the indefectible prerogative of the Divine Sonship, the pledged Eternal Word of God.

Henceforth Rachel and Leah represent the Gentile and the Jewish dispensations. Rachel represents Humanity as the special object of God's love (John iii. 16; Tit. iii. 4). Leah represents the Jewish nation as the chosen instrument through which that love should be communicated to mankind. The law preceded the Gospel covenant, but the Gospel love to mankind preceded the law.

Fitly, then, do Rachel, the first-loved, and Leah the first-wedded, symbolize the two covenants. Leah was not to be substituted for Rachel by a limitation repudiating the earlier love, but the Catholic Church symbolized by Rachel was to attain supernatural glory through David. David, the offspring of Leah, was supernaturally endowed so as to be the instrument of Divine life for the accomplishment of the purpose in which Reuben first, and Ephraim afterwards, had shown their incapacity. Reuben represents the natural Adam; Ephraim the substituted natural seed of Abraham. Both these inheritors of the outward typical claim had failed. The kingdom of the eternal purpose had therefore to be given by supernatural appointment. God would send His own Son. In David the Word of sure Promise prepared the way for the Incarnation of the Word of Grace.

Joseph was the natural heir of Rachel's prerogative. He stands out in solitary prominence as the type of Messiah, the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel (Gen. xlix. 22-26). This typical shepherd was cut off by reason of Ephraim's unbelief and disobedience, yet he was the type of One that should come after him, the sure Messiah. Ephraim's typical ascendancy would culminate in Joshua, the son of Nun, his natural descendant,

who would lead Israel into the typical land of promise. From David, the substitute supernaturally chosen, would descend the great Captain of Salvation for all mankind, Jesus, the Virgin-born.

Psalm 49. has shown us that man is naturally incapable of accomplishing the Divine work of redemption, and Ephraim's fall illustrated that incapacity.

It was not in disloyalty to David as chosen for supernatural headship, but rather in sad recognition of man's natural incapacity, that Asaph looked back to Joseph, the special object of the Patriarch's affection and the possessor of such great Divine prerogatives. Ishmael was loved of his father. Esau was his father's favourite son. Joseph was chosen by his father in a very special manner. The supernatural vocation, however, belongs not to earthly but to Divine choice. Joseph in all his natural glory was only a type of that glorious Shepherd of Israel who should arise, the Son of David.

But then, further; Rachel died by the way, giving birth to Benjamin.

Benjamin represents the faithful, those who are Rachel's spiritual offspring, born, as it were, in that Bethlehem near to which Rachel died. All the faithful are supernaturally born in the Person of Christ, whose members they are.

Joseph and Joshua, in their typical glory, represent the natural inheritance of the first-beloved. Benjamin, the child of death, is the child of God's Right Hand. He represents the faithful, dead as they are to the world, while Ephraim represents mankind in their vocation to the Divine Sonship, which, alas! they too readily put aside. Benjamin is given to Judah for David's sake. All the faithful are given to Him who is of the tribe of Judah, the well-beloved Son of God.

Judah, then, was to be the natural ancestor of Jesus

after the flesh, but Rachel was to be the supernatural, typical, mother of the faithful, who are dead to the world, but alive to God in the mystical Body of Christ. Hence the prophet puts Rachel forward as bewailing the children of Bethlehem, naturally Leah's children, but, in a higher sense, her own children by the typical economy of grace (Jer. xxxi. 15).

Alas! in a later time, the Jewish people, of whom Christ was born in accordance with the special prophecy to David, were to fall away, as all that is natural must fall away. The supernatural vocation of Messiahship, the supernatural Incarnation of the Son of God involve of necessity a supernatural throne and empire. Mount Zion must be raised above earthly limitations to the Right Hand of God. The natural sovereignty must become world-wide. When David's throne was thus Divinely glorified, the natural heart of David's descendants could not rise to accept the glory. Like Joseph of old, the Incarnate Lord of Glory became a stranger to His mother's children, as the Psalmist foretold. Some indeed there were, and not a few, who would believe, but the typical and chosen nation as a whole could not rise to the archetypal glory which was the Divine outcome of their Divine vocation. None but the children of her who died to the world could belong to Him who was not born of human seed. These as the children of Rachel's typical death—agonising through the flesh, but powerful with the Right Hand of God—were born into a Divine life by dying to the world. These are born on the way of fruitfulness, the way of the Cross, the way that leads to Bethlehem, where the Bread of Life is found.

This was further expressed in a type, for, when Ephraim broke away from David's heir, Benjamin was given to Judah for David's sake (1 Kings xi. 13). Thus Benjamin did not share his brother's rebellion, but

became the type of the faithful Jews, who would accept Messiah, the Son of David, when He should come. For this reason, indeed, Benjamin had special honour amongst the tribes when they returned from Babylon. Benjamin had also a special honour in Christ, for from him descended the great Apostle who should gather the Gentile world into the Church.

These considerations seem to furnish the key for the Asaphic Psalms.

The eight Psalms of the faithful sons of Korah are followed by the great Psalm of Jubilee, the Psalm of Divine manifestation in Christ.

PSALM 50.

THE SACRIFICE OF JUBILEE

THIS Psalm "rings in the Christ that is to be." The Son of God, thirsting for Divine glory in the weakness of human nature, appears in this Psalm with the glory which belongs to Him as the Word of the Father. "God has spoken," "God shines forth." "God comes." The perfect beauty of Mount Zion enshrines the eternal Word of life. He is the true Lawgiver of Sinai, the Prophet greater than Moses, summoning the whole world to judgement, and ordaining the covenant to be ratified over the great Sacrifice of Calvary, by those who should bring its memorial before God in the holiness of supernatural life, welcoming with Eucharistic praise the salvation which God has brought.

This, the ninth Psalm of Book II., makes a fitting close to the first section, which we may regard as being set apart to the glory of God the Father. The section seems to embody the Divine Mission of which our Lord speaks, "God so loved the world, that He gave His Only-Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should

not perish, but should have everlasting life" (John iii. 16), giving Him to bear our sins in this land of exile, and to build up the City of God by the power of grace, that in the perfect beauty of the heavenly Zion the holy nation of His redeemed might be delivered from that bondage under death which no natural kinsman could bring to an end, and go forth in the fulness of that Jubilee which the law foresignified by the assertion of the Divine claim to possess them as His own. They would go forth freed from the bondage of Satan, because they were not their own, but really belonged to God.

Attention is called to Psalm 51. as the beginning of a new series, by the detailed historical notice in the title, which gives the occasion of its composition. This is just correspondent to the detailed heading which marks off Ps. 18, as the first of a new series.

THE THIRD QUINDECAD

The third Quindecad consists of a series of five trilogies:—

- The Trilogy of the Sin-Bearer (Pss. 51.-53.).
- The Trilogy of Persecution (Pss. 54.-56.).
- The Trilogy of the Crucifixion (Pss. 57.-59.).
- The Trilogy of Victory (Pss. 60.-62.).
- The Trilogy of Resurrection (Pss. 63.-65.).

PSALM 51.

GOD APPEARING IN THE LIKENESS OF SINFUL FLESH AND FOR SIN

BATH-SHEBA is the type of sinful humanity, "the daughter of the oath," because God has sworn that His Son shall be born of our sinful race.

The fifteen Psalms beginning with this mystery

exhibit the Divine "Covenant made over sacrifice" (Ps. 50., 5), which Asaph chanted as belonging to the predestined manifestation of God.

Ps. 51. is the utterance of the Incarnate God taking upon Himself the burden of our nature and the likeness of our sin. He is conceived *in* a sinful nature, but not *with* a sinful nature. He inherits from His Mother the burden of sin, but the human nature is altogether passive while being assumed by the Divine Personality. That Personality clothes itself with our human substance, being conceived by the Holy Ghost, for the Holy Ghost proceeds from Him and is the Instrument of His Divine actions. He is thus altogether free from the taint of sin which would have been unavoidable had there been any earthly act of generation, or conception. The mother remains a virgin. A clean thing is not brought *out of* an unclean as its origin. Although He bears the sin of all mankind by living fellowship of nature, yet He is brought untainted *through* that defiled humanity, for His Personality remains in its Divine glory by the unity of the Holy Ghost.

Sin cannot be where there is no personality, and in the Incarnation human personality is excluded by the presence of the Divine Personality. The nature of man is simply taken by the Son of God into the unity of Divine Life, although in outward association it has to bear all the consequences of man's sin, to which its natural sensibilities make it alive.

"Grace and truth come by Jesus Christ." They are brought hither from God as the inalienable activity of His Divine, Incarnate, Person. Divine Truth is in His inward parts, making His whole manhood to be livingly and perfectly in correspondence with the Divine Ideal. His human nature learns Wisdom secretly by the Personal indwelling of the Eternal Wisdom. The Spirit

of Wisdom resting upon Him fills every faculty of His Being with the illuminating glory of the Divine Unction. Thus He is the Christ.

This elevation of our nature from its sinful condition to the glorious Christ-life is the subject of Ps. 51. David prays for the renewal, the preservation, the establishing, which the operation of the Holy Ghost accomplishes in the human heart changed from stony death to spiritual life by the Incarnation.

It is this Christ-life, the perfection of manhood anointed with the Holy Ghost, which makes the Body prepared for sacrifice acceptable to God, in a way in which no legal sacrifices would be (Ps. 40. 6).

The heavenly Jerusalem is the extension of Christ's Body, and so it is the Temple in which Christ ministers. The ministrations of this Temple are not human acts but Divine, although carried on by the agency of men as the instruments of living power which Christ, in His own Person, as Head of the Body, regulates, sanctifies, and empowers. So would the contemplated Messiah "build up the walls of Jerusalem," that therein He might continually, as High Priest, gather His people round Himself in Eucharistic oblations, sacrifices of righteousness, triumphant over death. So would God, who has called all the world around Himself by the Mediation of Christ, take pleasure in the consummated glory of the Incarnation of His Son, who taketh away the sins of the world.

Ps. 51. therefore brings Christ before us in the fullest consciousness of identification with our sin, by the absolute oneness of nature, in which He is united with sinners. It sets His Birth before us as the initiatory act whereby Jerusalem is to be built up, in accordance with the words of Isaiah, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious Cornerstone,

a sure Foundation" (Isa. xxviii. 16). As Eve was built from the body of Adam, so the heavenly Jerusalem is built from the Body of Christ.

This is the central Penitential Psalm.

Ps. 6. spoke of His human nature looking forward to death by reason of the general doom of man's sin.

Ps. 32. spoke of Him pleading with His members, who obtain forgiveness through Him.

Ps. 38. spoke of Him as appropriating to Himself our sins, which hold Him back from the fulness of glory, while we plead the merits of His Person before God in holy Memorial, seeking to have our bodies made clean by His Body.

Ps. 51. approaches the subject from the other side. His Divine Person is set before us with secret power of new life, entering the sinful mass of our humanity, so that there may be an element of purity to supply the living substance of the City of God, and an element of meritorious power to supply the sacrifices of righteousness, which shall be acceptable unto God.

Wonderful mystery of the Atonement! We, who are sinners by nature, are thus enabled to offer to God the sacrifice of praise worthy of the glorious Jubilee that God may be glorified (Ps. 50.).

As Book I. dwelt upon the outward human side of the Work and Passion of Christ, the suffering of death under Satan's power, so Book II. dwells upon the sorrow which His humanity suffered interiorly by reason of His Divine consciousness, His thirst for God, His suffering Godward, in being held back from the Divine fruition. In virtue of this Divine Life, there is the command "Destroy not," but He is waiting, hushed, upon God, until at length we reach the Triumphal march and the kingdom of peace.

Ps. 102. contrasts the perishableness of earthly life

with the changelessness of the Divine life of the Creative Word.

Ps. 130. is the cry of the Incarnate Word from the deep darkness of our earthly night, looking forward to the Resurrection Morning.

Ps. 143. is the last utterance of the faithful servant ere He plunge into Sheol, confident in the inherent life of the Divine Name and Righteousness, to be changed as it were in an instant into the jubilant song of victory, beginning with Ps. 144., and expanding into the Septuor of praise and the final Halleluyahs, with which the Psalter closes.

PSALM 52.

THE OVERTHROW OF ANTICHRIST

THIS Psalm originated in the slaughter occasioned by Doeg's telling Saul that David had visited Ahimelech. "The brother of the king," for that is what his name means, and his father's house at Nob, seem to typify the faithful who receive Christ, and are thus brought under the hatred and persecution of the world. The Psalm has an immediate and verbal echo in Herod's command to destroy all the "babes and sucklings" at Bethlehem, but an eternal one in the condition of all those who have to take up their cross and follow Christ. God, however, who accepts the Sacrifice of Christ for the building up of Jerusalem, will root up the worldly power out of his dwelling. The mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped. Christ's kingdom is the kingdom of truth. Truth is in His inward parts. Satan, on whom Antichrist relies, by reason of the speciousness of worldly violence, is a liar from the beginning. His mouth shall be stopped

PSALM 53.

THE INCARNATION TESTING THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD

Ps. 53. is an Elohist replica of the Jehovistic Psalm 14. God visits the world to see who will receive Him. He looked down in Ps. 14. to see if He could find a David, a Beloved. Here He looks down, sending His Beloved to make the enquiry. For judgement Christ came into the world (John ix. 39). This Psalm follows the Psalm of Antichrist (Ps. 52.), as the previous Psalm followed Ps. 13., which set forth the long-continued tyranny of worldly power. The Elohist Psalm seems to apply to the nations of the world in the days of Antichrist, as the Jehovistic Psalm refers more specially to the Jews rejecting the Saviour, which was the Lord of their Covenant.

Such is the Trilogy of the Sin-Bearer.

1. God manifest in the Likeness of Sinful Flesh and for Sin (Ps. 51.).
2. The Overthrow of Antichrist (Ps. 52.).
3. The Incarnation testing the Nations of the World (Ps. 53.).

It is followed by the Trilogy of Persecution.

1. The Opposition of the Natural Heart to God (Ps. 54.).
2. Christ and Antichrist (Ps. 55.).
3. The World's Fear of the Church (Ps. 56.).

So does God's coming in the flesh make manifest the sinfulness which He comes to remove, awakening persecution instead of gratitude.

PSALM 54.

THE CARNAL OPPOSITION OF THE HUMAN HEART
TO CHRIST

DAVID is among the Ziphites, his own tribesmen. They send word to Saul that he is hiding among them in the wood. So the Jews accuse Jesus before the Roman Governor, because He made Himself a King. Still Christ does not shrink from calling us brethren, but still we are too ready to deliver Him up to any natural claimant of our affections, still loth to endanger ourselves for Him. Enemies are lying in wait for us on every side. Whoever bears witness to Christ must be an object of dread and of dislike to them. There is a hidden power which they cannot fathom. They seek things which be of men, not of God. But amidst all, the faithful heart looks up to God and knows that God is on his side.

PSALM 55.

CHRIST AND ANTICHRIST

WE have here David's complaint against Ahithophel, who already has appeared as a type of Judas. The Psalmist longs for the wings of a dove, to flee away and be at rest. It is the longing of Jesus, who, by the power of the Holy Ghost, would go not again into the wilderness of temptation, but into the wilderness of security among the dead, for He looks forward to be set at peace where His enemies cannot come nigh Him. Death is their destruction, but to Him it is deliverance. They go to the pit of corruption, but the Holy One of God will not see corruption even in Sheol. The terrors of death are, to Him, not those which belong to another world. If He enter there He is

at peace. This world is to Him the world of death, for He has to bear the tyranny of sin whereby He has been driven out of that supremacy of righteousness wherewith He would rule in His Father's Name.

The next opposition comes from the people of Gath. The Ziphites, Ahithophel, the Gittites—seem to represent the Jews, Judas or Antichrist, and the Gentiles.

Or they may be taken by an interpretation quite consistent with this, as representing respectively the carnal heart, the devil, and the power of the world.

All mankind unite against Christ in their several turns. So we now have a Psalm which represents the whole human race in its antagonism. God had visited the world to see if there were any that would turn and seek God. All in succession gather together against Him.

PSALM 56.

THE ETERNAL WORD SILENT IN THE HOUSE OF
THE GREAT GOLIATH

THIS Psalm is entitled "The Silent Dove of the Far-off Regions." It is the voice of the Holy Ghost. In the unity of the Holy Ghost, the Son abides far off from man, One God with the Father. The Incarnate Word is silent during the ministry of humiliation. The world is the City of the great Goliath. It is also the wine-press of our Lord's Passion. The people of this Gath would drive away the great David as their enemy. He has slain the Prince of this world. Here He, like David feigning madness, took upon Himself our sinful likeness, but He was never moved from the love of God. The Psalmist knows that God treasures up in His bottle the tears of His Passion. "He will walk before God in the light of life."

Ps. 56. and the four which follow immediately (also Ps. 16.) are called Miktam. That title is too obscure for us to attach any symbolical meaning to it; but it seems to indicate a certain identity of purpose in these six Psalms.

The trilogy which follows is headed, "Destroy Not."

Messiah although He is the Word of God, is seen in the greatest depth of human abasement. Yet the Divine nature of the Word would not suffer Him to perish. "In God will I praise His Word: in the Lord will I praise His Word." He is the true Job. Satan cannot touch His life (Job ii. 6).

The Divine watchword of this trilogy remains for ever as the guarantee of the Church.

Trilogy of the Crucifixion.

1. The Confident Hope of the Dying One (Ps. 57.).
2. The Descent into Hell (Ps. 58.).
3. The Escape from the Grave (Ps. 59.).

PSALM 57.

THE CONFIDENT HOPE OF THE DYING ONE

DAVID is in the cave of Adullam, the great type of the grave of Christ, where all that are in debt to God, all sinners, are gathered into the kingdom of grace, buried with Christ in Holy Baptism. Christ contemplates the pit, but "His heart is fixed." He looks forward for His glory, His Divine nature, to wake up, that He Himself may arise at early dawn. He will "awake the dawn," for His own resurrection involves the resuscitation of the multitudes who have been buried in the darkness of sin. They who are buried with Him in the home of grace shall wake out of that darkness. The light of His grace shining in their hearts is the dawn of the

Eternal Day. "Together with My dead Body shall they arise." It is "the morning spread upon the mountains," the coming of the Son of Man, shining from the East unto the West, over all the earth.

This first Psalm of the trilogy, "Destroy Not," is, as it were, a Friday Psalm upon the Death of Christ.

PSALM 58.

THE DESCENT INTO HELL

THE rebellion of Absalom supplies the next Psalm—Absalom that had so often heard the charm of David's sacred song! Alas! it moved him not (verse 6). How often would David have gathered him to his heart. Yes; he was still present to that heart, a source of agonizing grief, for he, "the father of peace," knew not the things belonging to his peace (Luke xix. 42).

The judge who ruled in God's Name has to speak the word of doom which has been so long mocked by the rebellious party as feeble "silent justice." He who acts for God must now pronounce the Divine doom with all the agony of a father's heart. Yet it is not the dull justice of a Roman patriot. It is the bright tender love of him whom Absalom has spurned.

Our Lord spoke to the Jews as being no longer the nation of peace, but "of their father the devil." They would not hear though "no man ever spake as this Man."

David has been forbearing for a long time, but he relies upon God to sweep away all the preparations of the rebellious party. Their destruction was not to be by himself but by God. He may have been negligent as a king in checking the conspiracy which Absalom was raising, but he knew that God would not let it succeed.

Jesus gave Himself without resistance to the power

that seized Him, but He knew that He must rise on the third day. This is like a Saturday Psalm in which we contemplate the temporary triumph outwardly of the powers of hell. But the triumph is only outward, apparent and transitory. The Conqueror will come from Edom, red with the blood of His enemies.

PSALM 59.

THE ESCAPE

THIS Psalm belongs to the earlier years of David's life. It may perhaps be the earliest of his Psalms which we possess.

The companies of Saul are watching the house where David is. Michal, Saul's daughter, is yet with her husband. The faithful wait for Christ's deliverance from His enemies. "Who is as God?" Michal's name thus calls us to look for God's power. The Jews can only find the dead Body of Christ, as the image in the bed covered with goat's hair. His soul is escaped in resurrection life as David by the window. The house of Saul's daughter is the Jewish Covenant. The Bride is within the house. The unbelieving Jews are watching but are not really living in the Covenant.

The Psalm ends with a prophetic denunciation of the Jews in a double and, at first sight, a contradictory judgement.

1. They are not to be slain but to be scattered as a perpetual witness of God's judgement.

2. They are to be brought to an end that they may be no more. As a nation they are to be absorbed eventually into the Christian Church, having no national prerogatives, but mysteriously grafted anew into the olive which was at the first their own. This is not to be a gradual, but a manifest and congregational

absorption, for they will all together confess that "the God of Jacob is the God who rules to the ends of the earth." He is the God whom Christians worship.

Naturally we proceed to the Trilogy of Victory.

1. The Royal Banner set up (Ps. 60.).
2. The Eternity of the Kingdom (Ps. 61.).
3. The Security of the Faithful in the Kingdom that cannot be moved (Ps. 62.).

PSALM 60.

THE ROYAL BANNER

DAVID comes before us in his victory.

Ps. 20. was written when he was going forth to battle with assurance of Divine favour.

Ps. 21. celebrates the triumph when in the third year he had gone down to Rabbah, and Ittai, the Gittite, had brought the golden crown from the head of the god Milcom, which David subsequently wore.

The Ammonites were fearfully punished for their unprovoked outrage when David had sent to them messengers of peace and sympathy (1 Chron. xix.).

In the first year of the war David's army had conquered Hadadezer, the Syrian ally of Ammon, and again in the second year, when the Syrians rallied round him after his defeat, David subdued them all. Now the Edomites fell upon a portion of David's army in the south, and wasted the country which had but few troops to protect it. Ps. 44. refers to this Edomite invasion. Abishai conducted the Edomite war under the supreme command of Joab.

In 2 Sam. viii. 13, we should read "Edomites" instead of "Syrians," "Edom" for "Aram." Otherwise we must suppose "smote the Edomites" has fallen out. The words are found in the LXX.

This Psalm was probably composed previous to the victory in the valley of salt. It is an act of faith, while Ps. 44. is an act of humiliation. Ps. 44. 10 is almost identical with Ps. 60. 12.

The overthrow of the Edomites was almost a war of extermination. Hadad, although a bitter enemy of Solomon, had not strength to rally them against Israel. It was not until the reign of Jehoram that they rebelled and shook off the dominion of Judah (2 Chron. xxi. 8-10). The bitter enmity of Edom never ceased. Esau was Jacob's persistent foe. In the time of Nebuchadnezzar they joined with the invaders and brought upon themselves the imprecations of a later Psalmist (Ps. 137. 7.) and the denunciation of prophets.

Edom represents the natural man in his fierce antagonism to the people of God. Saul individually, Edom as a kindred nation, set forth the diabolical virulence of antagonism cherished by the natural seed of Abraham against the spiritual. It is the bitterness of the supernatural man possessed by Satan, for the Patriarchal origin indicates a Divine call, although in both cases the supernatural power of that call is set aside.

The Edomites in their conduct towards the Jews seem (as Hagar and Ishmael did) to foreshadow the Jews themselves when, rejecting God, they were given up to malevolent bitterness against Christ and His Church. This victory therefore implies the victory of the true David over the false Jews. The Jews, according to Ps. 59., shall be consumed, converted, and made subject to Christ. Aram Naharaim and Aram Zobah represent the worldly allies of Satan, the kingdoms of the world.

In the conquest of Rabbah we see the overthrow of Satan's power. In the midst of it David is involved in sin. So the triumph of the Church over the world

and Satan was marred by the indulgence incident to worldly prosperity. Ps. 44. tells of God no longer going forth with our hosts in the days of Antichrist.

There is, however, to be a destruction of Edom, a final conversion of the Jews. No one but God can lead the way into the stronghold of Edom, the Jewish heart. Yet the issue is not doubtful. He shall tread down our enemies. This is connected with the victory in the valley of salt. The valley of salt naturally implies the great overthrow of which Sodom and Gomorrah are a type, the final judgement.

The banner which is set up as a rallying post is the Cross of Christ, the sign of the Son of Man.

PSALM 61.

THE ETERNITY OF THE KINGDOM

So David chants of victory. He proceeds to declare the eternity of the Kingdom. "He shall abide before God for ever." This can be true of no one but of the Divine Messiah. "From the ends of the earth" whereon the Church is found, He appeals to God. He looks to be led to the "Rock higher than man," whereon Christ is building His Church. The Rock is the glory of the Divine Sonship. As the Son of God He is to "dwell in the tent" of God, the tabernacle of His Body, "covered with the wings of the Holy Ghost." The tent is in itself a transient home, but eternal by reason of the Divine indwelling. He has inherited the earth by Divine birthright. "They that fear God's Name" find that God has prepared for them an inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven. So will the King dwell before God (*πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*) for ever and ever. He shall have Divine virtues, grace, and truth to guard Him, and His people who are one with Him.

This Psalm belongs to the time of Absalom, and was probably composed after the defeat of the rebels in the wood of Ephraim. Naturally the victory that day was turned to sadness by the death of Absalom, but the king in the power of inspiration looks forward to the greater King, Messiah, and feels himself transported into the eternity of the promised Kingdom. So he rises out of his personal sorrow to the confidence of faith.

So must we also look forward to the attainment of Divine glory as earthly things perish. Earthly successes were sad unless they enshrined Divine hopes.

PSALM 62.

DIVINE EXPECTATION

THE promised Kingdom cannot fail, but in waiting for it we have to be resigned patiently to the Divine appointment. There must be many disappointments while we wait. Sometimes perhaps successes, like the victory over Absalom, may be sadder than defeat. We have to triumph over what we cherish with the deepest love. The Church of Christ has to wait in silence for the salvation of God to shine out in its fulness, not as the accomplishments of natural desires and efforts, but in triumph over self and all that self would delight in. So must we experience the vanity of man and the strength of God bringing a merciful reward. This is the victory of faith which overcometh the world.

Ps. 62. is akin to Ps. 39. The earlier Psalm spoke of the nothingness of man whose nature Christ assumed that therein He might offer the acceptable Sacrifice. This Psalm speaks in the same language of the nothingness of man, however much he may boast himself in worldly power against the Church of God. The reliance

of God's people is in the kingdom of grace. The "breath," the emptiness of human appearance, is contrasted with the Rock of Divine security and the power which God not only possesses as belonging to Himself, but which is His unfailing gift to all who do His will. He gives us according to our work, and strengthens us as the needs of our work become greater.

The Trilogy of the Resurrection follows. This sets forth the real character of the victory to which the saints must look. It is not of this world. The worldly hopes of the loved Absalom must die. Then the reality of the promised glory shall be manifest.

1. The Expected Morn (Ps. 63.).
2. The Trustful Expectation of Vindication from God (Ps. 64.).
3. The Harvest Song of the Great Day (Ps. 65.).

PSALM 63.

THE EXPECTED MORN

THIS was written by David in the wilderness of Judah. Delitzsch speaks of this Psalm as being more akin to Ps. 61. than the one which intervenes. The last Psalm, however, was the expression of human sadness in the midst of Divine confidence while waiting—the sorrows, the travail-pangs, of victory. A time must intervene between the triumph of Christ over Satan and His final entrance along with His saints upon the completed victory by the manifestation of the risen glory of the Kingdom.

Ps. 63. is closely akin to Pss. 42., 43. David halted in the wilderness between Jericho and the Dead Sea, which is a region of terrible drought, void of all relief. He contemplates the victory as an accomplished fact. He knows it must be so by reason of the Divine promise to Solomon. His soul is thirsting, but he is all the

while rejoicing. In the last Psalm he was filled with much thought of human vanity. Now he is filled with the transporting consciousness and anticipation of Divine power.

This Psalm is the Morning Psalm of the Church, beholding in each day of grace as it returns an earnest of the Resurrection that is to be.

PSALM 64.

THE TRUSTFUL EXPECTATION OF VINDICATION FROM GOD

"THE mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped." So the last Psalm ended. But the Psalmist looks beyond the rebels that were calumniating him. With him "it is a small matter to be judged by man's judgment." He knows that God will hear his prayer. The decree of God is sure. As he said of old, "My shield is upon God."

The Jews have imprecated against themselves the Blood of Christ, and so their own tongues make them fall, but Jesus "committed Himself" in silence "to Him that judgeth righteously" (1 Pet. ii. 23). The judgment of God upon the Jews in their scattering throughout the world is evident to all men, calling all men "to declare God's work and wisely consider of His doing."

The absence of any certain historical occasion for this Psalm serves to throw into greater prominence its prophetic character.

PSALM 65.

THE HARVEST SONG OF THE GREAT DAY

It is the joy of harvest. Whether written by David or no its characteristic is the same. It is a Psalm of the

Beloved speaking in His people, if not in His own Person. It sets forth the Resurrection of Christ in the completeness of His mystical Body, the harvest of the Great Day.

Morning after morning has the Church, participating in the first Resurrection, sung the Resurrection Song, anticipating the morn when all the faithful in one great congregation shall appear before God (Ps. 63.). Men have all the while been blaspheming. The Jews have all the while been bearing the consequences of their own imprecation (Ps. 64.). Now the harvest comes. The substance of things hoped for is no longer a matter of faith but of glorious fruition.

Thus closes this Quindecad.

We see how the Divine life of Christ is herein set before us, as the secret principle of His great anguish when He became Incarnate. This was the cause of terror to His enemies, rousing them to persecution. This was His security in death. This made His Banner victorious. This becomes a manifest glory in the end when His people enter with Him into His full triumph.

The closing Heptad of this Book seems to set forth the work of the Holy Ghost. It leads us onward to the heavenly Kingdom of the greater Solomon, the Prince of Peace.

The work of Christ has been traced from His conception in the womb in the likeness of sinful flesh to the harvest of the Resurrection, when the corn of wheat has brought forth its full result. Now we seem to have the words of the Apocalypse anticipated. "The Spirit and the Bride say, come." The Church goes forth as the Evangelizer of all nations in the Name of the Holy Trinity.

Three Psalms of David form the central portion of this Septuor, but the absence of David's name from

Pss. 66, 67. separates off this Heptad from the fifteen preceding it.

PSALM 66.

THE DELIVERANCE OF THE CHURCH FROM THE WORLD-POWER

THIS Psalm is designated in the LXX as a Psalm of the Resurrection. The nation rises out of Egypt: the Church, by the power of the Holy Ghost, out of the Baptismal grave. The joy of Resurrection consists in glorifying God for His own intrinsic excellence, the fruition whereof is our true delight.

Pss. 44. and 66. seem to echo respectively the first and the closing sections of Ps. 22. The Psalmist said: "I will perform my vows in the sight of them that fear Him" (Ps. 22. 24, 26). Now he calls all "them that fear God" to hearken while he "pays his vows" (verses 13, 16). All nations are to be witnesses of Messiah's priestly glory. He has finished the work which the Father gave Him to do. The fatlings which He brings are His own merits. God has heard His prayer.

All nations were summoned. "All the earth shall worship Thee" (verse 5). He now goes on to plead for God to make His light to shine upon all nations.

PSALM 67.

THE CHURCH THE EVANGELIZER OF THE WORLD

HE said: "Bless our God, ye peoples" (Ps. 66. 8). Now He calls upon God to be merciful and bless us, and that blessing includes "all the peoples." All are to be gathered into the Church. There shall be a new earth when man's sin is passed away. The curse brought upon the earth by the first Adam shall be done away when the second Adam is acknowledged universally.

PSALM 68.

THE CHURCH MARCHING IN PENTECOSTAL POWER

THIS grand Psalm describes Messiah's march of spiritual power. His Church goes forth in the fulness of the Pentecostal majesty. That spiritual progress is not a new beginning. It is the development of a power latent from the first days, when God called His Son out of Egypt. There is a gradual progress in God's works. It is so in the physical world. It is no less so in the kingdom of grace. The later developments are true to the elementary intimations of previous times. The growth is by the infusion of Divine power. The powers of each successive stage vary with its needs. "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." The progress is always continuous and harmonious. Whatever delay there may be, nothing is ever retrograde, nothing unexpected, in the work of God. The object of prophecy is not only to guarantee events as being Divinely ordered, when they happen, but also to stimulate the faithful with holy anticipation, that, in such ways as they can, they may co-operate. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for," and the faithful must be living in the future of God's promises if they would rise up to the requirements of His Providence.

The victories of Canaan were wrought because "the shout of a King" was in the midst of Israel. Messiah was already with them, for they bore in themselves the elect Humanity wherein He should become Incarnate.

The people of God go forth in supernatural power like doves settling upon the dark rock with heavenly brightness. The Lord of Sinai, who called Moses up to Himself on the mountain, is still guiding His people. The whole universe has become a temple. Messiah

advances through the outer courts to the inmost shrine of Divine glory. From His throne above Jerusalem He rules His Church. In previous Psalms it has already been seen that Mount Zion is but the transient and typical designation under which we have to look for the heavenly Zion. Jerusalem is the City of the Great King, but the earthly is elevated to the heavenly. The Psalm welcomes the gift of the Spirit of life which the ascended Saviour sheds down upon His Church. In ascending He received gifts not for Himself alone as a Person, but in the power of the Divine Spirit, so that He could communicate them to His Body, the Church, extending thus His human nature with continuous growth, until it reach the fulness of the measure of its appointed development by the sacramental power of an Apostolical ministry. By the Spirit within His Church He rebukes the powers of the world. By the same Spirit His people are built together.

The march culminates in the occupation of the heavenly mountain-throne by the ascended God of Israel, who thence sheds forth His gifts. With various Divine titles, sharply repeated, the Psalmist proclaims his homage. He whose name is JAH dwells in Heaven in His Manhood that He may dwell with man in His Godhead.

PSALM 69.

THE JUDICIAL CHARACTER OF THE PASSION

WHAT a change from the last Psalm to this one! From the jubilation of the Ascension we pass on to the terribleness of imprecation.

These two ideas are necessarily joined together. The spiritual triumph and exaltation of Christ, along with His saints, must have the doom of the ungodly in-

separably attached to it. Mere naturalistic interpreters regard the juxtaposition of these two Psalms as unreasonable. Spiritually, it is unavoidable.

In like manner, the Angel of the Lord is seen camping around the righteous in Ps. 34. and thrusting the ungodly to destruction in Ps. 35.

So, also, Ps. 109. finds its proper place between the victory of the Redeemer in Ps. 108. and His final glorification on the Eternal throne in Ps. 110.

The judgement of God is not an arbitrary selection of some to be His favoured ones. It is a judgement upon the universe, so that all who belong to that universe must receive their proper share in the consequences of redemption. They who accept the redemption rise to the throne of the Redeemer. They who reject the redemption must equally feel its power. That power is operative against themselves because they have put themselves in opposition to it. The purpose of the judgement is not the salvation of some, but the glorification of God by righteous retribution to all. So Christ is come for judgement into this world, that His presence may test the hearts of men by showing how they receive Him. When He comes again, He will come with retribution to all. The tares must be burnt. The bad fish must be cast away. The rebellious citizens must be slain in the presence of the Lord when He returns with His kingdom manifest. The man without a wedding garment must be cast out when the guests sit down to the marriage supper of the Lamb. The Apocalypse carries the solemn strain of denunciation onward.

It is love which denounces in order to win the rebellious. It is justice which must execute the fulness of doom when the rebellious have rejected love.

Love has done more than denounce. Love endured the Passion for all, whether they would accept it or no.

The Passion is not an external act that may be left unheeded without harm. The Passion in all its details was a moral and spiritual power, so that if man would accept its grace, God would accept the sinner, but if the sinner would not accept the grace, he must find that the moral consequences of the Passion recoil against him with the fulness of Divine indignation.

Thus we have the Passion pleaded in this Psalm. It is as truly the condemnation of the unbelieving as it is the salvation of the faithful. The Passion is the instrument of the Holy Ghost whether to convey righteousness or to convict of sin.

Jesus is glorified not simply by the inheritance of Divine Sonship, but by the merits of the Passion wherein He has struggled against God's enemy. This struggle He now pleads at God's Right Hand. So in Ps. 2. Messiah was to receive His glory by a double right—inheritance and conquest. The opposition He has borne for God's glory is the very measure of His reward.

The Psalm therefore concludes with a Doxology when the denunciation is complete. Heaven and earth and sea are to join in the praise of God, for the whole universe shall be renovated. It is the new Heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. They who have suffered with Christ shall be glorified with Him. The judgement shall be according to men's works. There is no arbitrary exemption in the kingdom of grace any more than in the material universe. The restorative power of the Passion is put within the reach of all. Infinite is the transforming power of love, the gifts which Jesus by His Passion, has obtained for man. Infinite is the penalty of refusing that love, infinite and irreversible.

PSALM 70.

THE CRY FOR JUDGEMENT

THIS brief Psalm is taken from Ps. 40. As it occurs at the close of the first two Books, it gathers them up in unity of purpose.

The vengeance formerly invoked Jehovistically against the Jews is now invoked Elohistically against the Gentiles, for Book II. leads us onward to the larger sphere of the world-wide covenant and kingdom.

The three Psalms 68.-70. are attributed to David. They belong certainly to the true David, exalted to the Right Hand of God according to the decree of Ps. 2. Christ identifies Himself with His Church. This Psalm is "for memorial." In pleading Christ's Passion we must not only look for vague benefits but for judicial deliverance.

The two parts of this Psalm are the mediatorial expression in prayer of that which the Apostle says by way of encouragement to his suffering disciples.

"It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. i. 6-8).

PSALM 71.

THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH MILITANT

THERE is a pause after Ps. 70. as there was after Ps. 40. In the former case it was to declare the blessedness of faith. Now we have the Church militant appealing to God.

This Psalm is almost entirely formed out of preceding Psalms. This suits well with a time when the faithful are lacking in spiritual freshness and energy. But let us notice that it suits well with the restfulness of faith which needs not fresh words, although looking forward to the fulfilment of God's ancient promises in fulness of result which surpasses all anticipation.

The Church, however, seems to be in a forsaken condition. In the midst of the despondency the Psalmist looks onward to the Resurrection. As Ps. 44. was followed by the jubilant strain of Ps. 45., so now this Psalm looks to the culminating glory of the Psalter in the typical portraiture of Messiah's Kingdom.

PSALM 72.

THE KINGDOM OF PEACE

THE vision of the Kingdom of Peace bursts out immediately. After the preparatory recollection of Ps. 40. by the repetition of its closing strain in Ps. 70., the Psalm of the Kingdom seems to serve as the chant in which the two Books find a common ending.

The Kingdom of the greater Solomon is come. The Spirit of Peace rules therein. "Of the increase of His government and of His peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David, and upon His Kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgement and with justice from henceforth even for ever" (Isa. ix. 7).

The troubles of Saul and Absalom and Adonijah have passed. The enthronement of Solomon during the very lifetime of David is the completion of all his wishes. A Divine purpose had announced, and now a Divine glory rests upon, the throne of God's chosen one. David sees already the glory of the Divine Sovereign illuminating the figure of his son with a halo of imperishable bright-

ness that shall shine out more and more. He looks forward to Messiah. For the glory of this vision he has had to bear the heart-rending excision of Absalom, who was the object of his natural absorbing love. The throne is assigned to Solomon by God's decree, and he beholds his son occupying the throne which is to develop in Messianic majesty worthy of God. Ps. 2., the prefatory Psalm, has been present to his mind through all these prayers and praises. Now that which was then decreed shall be perfected in the germinant personality of Solomon. That personality must enshrine all hopes until the Advent of Him by whose Divine Personality the human sovereign shall be absorbed into the fellowship of the eternal throne on high. In Him all nations shall be blessed. The King will receive gifts from all nations. Their gifts are but the acknowledgement of the joy and justice which He dispenses to all. The corn waving upon the hills cannot be understood merely of earth's outward harvests. The plenty of earth shines with the glory of the Mediator, in whom God and man are united. His Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom.

The prayers of David are fulfilled. In his sick chamber he looks forward to the growing glory of the Son who has been anointed as Israel's King. His prayers must ring on in endless praise.

BOOK III

THE three Books which constitute the last half of the Psalter contain Psalms which are generally of a very different character from the first two Books. They are more usually expressive of general devotion, and contain only occasional reference to the details of our Lord's Personal ministry. They rather belong to the Church as His Body.

Books III. and IV., each of them, contain seventeen Psalms, and this number, as being in Holy Scripture specially representative of God's covenant people, is quite consistent with their character.

Book III. seems to develop the thought of God with us, the Divine Sonship of the heavenly Kingdom.

Book IV. treats of the hidden life of the saints in God, the Divine glory of our life in Him.

PSALM 73.

GOD THE TRUE GOOD WHEREIN ISRAEL MAY
REJOICE

INTRODUCTORY

BOOK III. opens with eleven Psalms of Asaph, whose name has already appeared as the author of Ps. 50.

The first of them is introductory.

Asaph can scarcely have written as he does in Ps. 73. without thinking of the goodness of God manifested in

the history of Joseph. Asaph dwells upon the goodness of God as set forth in His original promises. He identifies himself more with the Divine side of the Covenant than with the particular recipient. Ephraim may fail. God does not fail. Therefore Judah succeeds to the Divine inheritance. Asaph calls us in these Psalms to recognize the Divine Sovereignty and the Divine Fatherhood towards the elect, as St Paul would do, setting aside any temporary and probationary covenant as being given only with a view to the eternal, whereas the eternal, with its own unchangeable requirements and promises, is sure to be fulfilled.

Two trilogies follow and then an Octave Psalm.

This Octave, and the Novena following constitute the two sections of this Book.

The Trilogy of the Holy Name.

1. The Outward Weakness of the Church in the World (Ps. 74.).
2. God upholding Her by His Name (Ps. 75.).
3. God's Presence with His People the Terror of the Enemy (Ps. 76.).

PSALM 74.

THE OUTWARD WEAKNESS OF THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD

GOD is the Ruler of the universe and the Judge of all. In Him, therefore, the people must confide.

Ps. 74. is the lamentation of God's people in their present distress. This Psalm either bewails an accomplished desolation of God's sanctuary, or else it looks forward to the future and perceives one to be near at hand. There is nothing in the details of the Psalm which goes beyond what a devout soul might utter while contemplating the short-lived character of all mere

external splendour. It does not rise to such a predictive character as our Lord's lamentation over Jerusalem. It belonged to the hortatory devotional element of prophetic utterances to speak which was at variance with the popular outside view of things, and so to bewail contemplated overthrow amidst intoxicating success, and to recognize elements of eventual blessing amidst disasters that might seem irreparable. The notion that prophets spoke in a mere superficial sympathy with the tone of the day does not seem to have any foundation. They called the faithful amidst general prosperity to be conscious of coming trouble, and then spoke to their heart, comforting them, as Isaiah did in the days of Hezekiah, for it was not right that coming trouble should be treated with disregard because of a respite being granted. It was mere selfishness to be satisfied with thinking all things well if only there were peace to the existing generation.

PSALM 75.

GOD UPHOLDING THE CHURCH BY HIS NAME .

THIS Psalm bears the superscription, "Destroy Not." It is thus connected with the Trilogy of the Crucifixion (Pss. 57.-59.). As Christ was safe, though His Body lay in the grave, so His people, baptized into His death, are safe, however weak their worldly position may be. They are the Sons of God in Christ.

He who was Crucified is the hidden strength of the world. He sustains it by His power and He will restore it in righteousness.

This Psalm introduces Him speaking with Divine power as the appointed Judge of all men. He comes "to put down the mighty from their seat and to exalt the humble and meek." So shall they whose

devastation was bewailed in the last Psalm receive the Kingdom.

PSALM 76.

GOD'S PRESENCE WITH HIS PEOPLE THE
TERROR OF THE ENEMY

THE LXX ascribe this Psalm with evident fitness to the time of the Deliverance from Assyria. The words inserted in the title are "referring to the Assyrian." The whole Trilogy may well refer to that danger, the prophet feeling assured, as he sung Ps. 74., that the worst must come by-and-by, although in this Psalm he rejoices at the supernatural deliverance. The devout are always liable to be set down as pessimists, because they see the certain retribution which awaits the carnal security of their own day, whereas such foresight of evil is necessary, in order to apprehend the true goodness of God which staves it off from time to time by His personal and miraculous interference. Such pessimism is not the gloominess of despondency, but the unworldliness of optimistic faith.

The Psalm evidently points onward to that in which all such overthrow and deliverance is concentrated, the resurrection of Christ. "God arises to judgement and to save all the meek of the earth. Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee."

The external supernatural security of God's covenant requires to be appropriated individually, and therefore the Trilogy of the Holy Name of God's protecting power is suitably followed by the Trilogy of Probation.

1. The Secret Preparation for God's Appearance (Ps. 77.).
2. The Disciplinary Guidance of God's People amidst their Rebellions (Ps. 78.).
3. The Appeal of the Penitent Race for Deliverance (Ps. 79.).

PSALM 77.

THE SECRET PREPARATION FOR GOD'S
APPEARANCE

THIS Psalm may fitly speak of "the years of the Right Hand of the Most High," for it was in the seventy-seventh generation from Adam that the Son of God was born.

This Psalm is also a Psalm of the Exodus, the bringing of God's Son out of Egypt. God's Name, as the foundation of a true covenant, involves the Personal Presence of Immanuel to be acknowledged by devout contemplation.

The Word of the Lord, when there is no open vision, is the object of devout desire. The Psalmist begins with gloom, but he appeals for the unchanging love of the Redeemer to be manifested by Messiah's promised appearance. How nobly was Ephraim coming forth at the head of the tribes! Yet they turn back from God. Because they fail of this faith in Shiloh, to whom the coming triumph belongs, Joseph, in spite of his eminence, forfeits the dignity of the headship. Then God gives the vacant place to Judah. Benjamin indeed was to have his trial first, but he too proved unfaithful. The two sons of Rachel were thus set aside, not simply but after probation, and by reason of failure. Not until they had failed could God transfer the chief authority to the tribe of Judah.

So does probation co-operate with Divine faithfulness in effecting God's purposes.

PSALM 78.

THE DISCIPLINARY GUIDANCE OF GOD'S PEOPLE
AMIDST THEIR REBELLIONS

FROM the marvels of God's love exhibited towards Israel in the Exodus, the Psalmist goes on to speak of the unfaithfulness of God's people and the consequent chastisements to which they were exposed. This prepares the way for the rejection of the outward people. "To them pertained the adoption, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the law and the service of God and the promises, whose are the fathers," for they were "the sons of Jacob and Joseph," and "of them, as concerning the flesh, Christ was to come." The life of Israel could not be valued aright save by "considering the years of the Right Hand of the Most High." This has been set forth in Ps. 77. Now we turn to consider the historical Israel. The truth is only too sadly emphasized. "They are not all Israel which are of Israel. They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed" (Rom. ix. 4, 5, 6, 8). The middle Psalm of this trilogy shows how the chosen people failed in their probation. The outward Israel must be cast aside. The tree must be cut down. It has its life in it, and will sprout up again, but the old dispensation must pass away. The heathen must punish them, for it is they who have dishonoured God. Gifts: discipline: penalty! Such is this Trilogy of Probation. "Not as though the Word of God had taken none effect." The Octave Psalm which follows these two trilogies is a Psalm of renovation, the upgrowth of the supernatural covenant, as no new idea, but as springing out of the old, which had to pass away by reason of man's sin.

The present Psalm is the longest in the Psalter except Ps. 119. It is intended that the two should stand out in complete contrast. The one is the way of the rebellious. The other is the way of the faithful. The ancient people who had seen God's judgements upon Egypt ought to have had their hearts lifted up to God in perfect reliance, ready to suffer all things according to His will, who had done so much for them; but their experience of His power only made them claim that power for their own service according to their present desires. Instead of serving God and resting in the security of His love, they wanted Him to serve them without regard to those great promises which He had set before them. Consequently His only gifts became hurtful to them. They rebelled also against Him, and He withdrew His Presence from the midst of them. They used it for a charm in war, and God, in punishing His enemies, rejected the leaders of His own people, and the place which He had chosen for His Name to dwell in.

All the while, however, He was watching for the Chosen One to appear who would fulfil His pleasure. To Him He makes an irrevocable promise. Ephraim and Benjamin failed in their probation. David is appointed by Divine election. God would be true, and though man could not rise to the Divine will by His own power, the Divine help would be given him.

So there would be a supernatural elevation granted to those who were willing to "set their hope in God and not to forget His commandments." But those of Judah who would not rise up to this must be left. The faithful shall be delivered, "but the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together" (Isa. i. 28.).

This trilogy, therefore, ends with a cry for vengeance against the heathen who have been God's instruments

of punishment to His people, but at the same time there is a confession of the sins by which that punishment has been evoked.

PSALM 79.

THE PENITENT RACE APPEALING FOR VENGEANCE

THIS Psalm, says Delitzsch, is "in every respect the counterpart to Ps. 74." This is true as to the outward troubles of which the Psalmist complains. But the ground of complaint is different. In the earlier Psalm the heathen dishonour of God's sanctuary is regarded as a profanation of the Divine glory. "Shall the enemy blaspheme Thy Name for ever?" (Ps. 74. 10). In the present Psalm it is different. The Psalmist feels the desecration of the sanctuary to be a Divine judgement upon the people who had His Name in the midst of them and have not walked worthy of it. The Psalm probably belongs to the Chaldean overthrow. The judgement averted in the days of Hezekiah has burst forth in its fulness, because Judah did not turn to God with perfect penitence. Hence has come the oppression of Babylon, and the people now cry out that God "may not remember the sins of ancient times," but may avenge them upon their enemies. They have not lived as God's people, but if God will show that He is their Father, they will now turn and "show forth His praise to all generations."

The difference therefore between Pss. 74. and 79. is just the difference of the ground of appeal. The glory of God's Name is the sole plea in the Trilogy of God's Name. The pity which the chosen people ought to move, while bearing their shame as penitents whose spiritual glory has been set aside, is the modification of that plea in the Trilogy of Probation.

These two trilogies with the Introductory Psalm and the Psalm which follows them, constitute an Octave. The Octave Psalm chants of regeneration.

PSALM 80.

THE SON OF GOD, THE RESTORER OF THE VINE
OF ISRAEL

IT is fitting that the Tenth Octave Psalm of the Psalter should be a Psalm of renewed life.

The vine which was brought out of Egypt is to spring up at length with full vitality. This plant is the stock from whence the Son of Man must have His birth. The natural Benjamin is to be succeeded by the supernatural Son of God's Right Hand. The true First-born of God appears amidst the desolation of the natural vineyard, so as to renew the nation of the old Covenant with the long-expected sprout of Divine life. The refrain is a call to God to turn, look down from Heaven, and visit this vine. So shall we not go back from Thee, like our fathers under the discipline of the old law, but, being quickened with grace and truth, we shall call upon Thy Name in the loving spirit of adoption. Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts! Cause the light of Thy Face to shine, and we shall be saved.

The Son of God, the Word of God, is the Restorer of the Vine of Israel. He betrothed the nation to Himself in coming out of Egypt.

It is said that the word "Wood" in this turning Psalm (verse 14) contains the central letter of the Psalter. Therefore the Masorites write that letter in a peculiar way so as to distinguish it.

This series of Asaphic Psalms closes with another trilogy, which may be called the Trilogy of the Divine

Word. The nine remaining Psalms of this Book, following upon the appeal for renewal by the Word of God, set forth the Divine life of the Christian Church. The Korahites contribute the Trilogy of Grace and the Trilogy of Regeneration.

Trilogy of the Divine Word (Pss. 81.-83.).

1. The Divine Call to Israel (Ps. 81.).
2. The Divine Predestination and Judgement (Ps. 82.).
3. The Overthrow of God's Enemies by the Word of God (Ps. 83.).

PSALM 81.

THE DIVINE CALL TO ISRAEL

WE may accept the reasoning of Delitzsch, which shows that this is a Paschal Psalm. It refers to the Ecclesiastical New Year rather than to the civil celebration and the Feast of Tabernacles. The Psalm has to do altogether with the deliverance from Egypt. That deliverance is a pledge of future deliverance, but it demands obedience. The sins of God's people are delaying the work of victory which He purposes to accomplish for them. His Word cannot fail either in its requirements or in its promises.

PSALM 82.

THE DIVINE PREDESTINATION AND
JUDGEMENT

GOD continues to speak. He is introduced as judging those who judge in His Name.

This Psalm is of special importance because our Lord appeals to it as the warrant of His own claim to be the Son of God.

The Divine Sonship, as set forth in Ps. 80., was the predestined glory of the chosen people. Our Lord

argues that if the nation are to become the sons of God, according to the predestination which is heard speaking now—"I said, ye are gods"—there must be a manifestation of God's true eternal Son, who is to communicate to them in living power the relationship wherein He Himself lives with the Father. The imperfect sonship of the law is to be "quickened" with true sonship in "the Man of God's Right Hand" (Ps. 80. 17). If the adopted sonship is to have that reality which befits the Divine Fatherhood, there must be a mediatorial sonship eternally possessing the inalienable glory of the Divine life, so that the Son of God, becoming man, may make them sons of God in union with Himself. The Word of God given in Scripture cannot be broken.

How fittingly does this argument coincide with the Trilogy of the Divine Word.

But while the promise of God must be fulfilled the severity of God cannot be mitigated. The Psalmist appeals to God's previous dealings with those whom He chose for the headship which Messiah is to receive. Lucifer fell from his throne in the princely hierarchy wherein the Son of the Morning should have reigned gloriously as the Prince of this World amidst the host of Heaven. When he had fallen, Adam was created in God's image to take his place. Man was to be the Conqueror of Satan, and all things were to be put in subjection under his feet. But as Adam did not abide in the truth of God's Word he died.

So now Judah must be cast off. Judah, as a nation, has forfeited her predestination by her sin. She must undergo the penalty as Lucifer and Adam did.

Nevertheless, as God's Word was sure to man though Adam died, so also God's Word remains sure to Israel though the outward Israel perish. There is a remnant,

according to the election of grace. God has not cast off His people, but they have cast Him away. He will send His Son. Immanuel will arise in the midst of the chosen people, and the promise to Abraham shall not fail. In Abraham's Seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed. "Arise, O God, judge Thou the earth, for Thou shalt inherit all the nations." God is the Judge. The Incarnate Son must be the Heir (Heb. i. 2; Rom. iv. 13). He is the Messiah to whom the Lord will give all nations for His inheritance (Ps. 2. 8), enthroning Him upon the Hill of Zion in fulfilment of the promises to David although His own people reject Him.

PSALM 83.

THE OVERTHROW OF GOD'S ENEMIES

THE Word is to come. The Psalmist appeals for His manifestation. "O God, keep not Thou silence."

The Word of God, faithful and true, who comes in judgement to tread the winepress of God's wrath, is the same that Isaiah saw coming from Edom (Isa. xiii. 1).

The chosen people are rejected for their unfaithfulness. The whole power of the natural heart is confederate against the Word of God. Various classes of hostility are represented by the tribal names mentioned in this Psalm.

Probably the historical occasion of this Psalm is what we read of in 2 Chron. xx. 14-17. Then we know that the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jehaziel, the son of Asaph. One may perhaps even suppose that the preceding Psalm was called forth by the instructions which Jehoshaphat gave to the judges which he set in the fenced cities of Judah. He bade them take heed

what they did, for the Lord was with them in the judgement (2 Chron. xix. 6). The appropriateness of these two Psalms to the same period may well lead one to think that they were both of them written by the seer whose name has been recorded as receiving a special inspiration in that time of emergency.

Here Edom is mentioned first, as being nearest of kin to Jacob and the bitterest of his enemies. The Ishmaelites are joined with them. The children of Lot were the leaders of the confederacy. Philistia, Tyre and Assyria took part in this onslaught. St Paul's explanation of the allegory of Hagar teaches us to understand by that name the servile Jews who looked only for earthly promises. Edom would therefore symbolize the profane Jews, in Sadducean unbelief. The children of Lot are cognate religionists, the offspring of the natural heart. The Gentile nations represent the antagonism of worldly powers.

The Jew, then, fallen from his inheritance, as declared in the preceding Psalm, is found here under various aspects in combination with the Gentile world, all of them opposed to the Incarnate Word. This is indeed strangely fulfilled in the experience of the Christian Church, Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Sadducees, and the Scribes were joined against Christ. The Jews were always bitter in stimulating persecution against the Christian. Rationalistic unbelief has specially found its strength in Jewish teachers whom we might have expected although repudiating Christianity, to have clung to the Word of God as mystically explained by their forefathers.

All these enemies, however, the Word of God, when He comes, will subdue. The day of Midian, here as in Isaiah, is the type of their sudden discomfiture by the Word of God. "The sword of the Spirit is the

Word of God." These enemies shall be "as whirling dust."

There is, however, a promise echoing on in the very judgement. The punishment which is to come upon these enemies when they are put to shame and perish, shall make them know that God, their own Jehovah, is indeed the Most High over all the earth. He is the living God, born of the Seed of Abraham, whom the Christian Church throughout the whole world claims as its Head, the Life-giving Word, by whom man is raised to the life of God.

We have here an anticipation of the penitent awaking of Judah in the last days, as foretold by Zechariah (Zech. xii. 6. 10).

Asaph's Psalms end with this contemplation of the fulfilling of God's promises to all the nations of the world through the Spiritual glory of the Incarnate Word.

Korahite Psalms now reappear.

We have already had an Octave of Psalms from this family (Pss. 42.-49.). They were Elohistie. They spoke of the natural necessity of God to the human heart of Messiah as the Son of God taking upon Himself man's nature which He had created for Himself.

Now we enter upon a Jehovistic series.

The Trilogy of Grace (Pss. 84.-86.).

1. The Joy of God's House (Ps. 84.)
2. The Covenant of Grace (Ps. 85.).
3. The Prayer of the Risen Mediator (Ps. 86.).

We have already seen that the Korahites seem specially to personify the faithful Jews who fell not away in their father's sin, but were found true to the House of God, the Body of Christ.

The Psalms of Asaph set before us the glory of God's loving Providence triumphing in spite of man's un-

belief. The Psalms of the Korahites rather set before us the experience of Divine grace triumphing in man's sanctification.

This Trilogy of Grace has been chosen of old time as the preparation to be said by the priest before celebrating the Holy Eucharist.

The manifestation of the Word of God in the previous trilogy was announced with warning of judgement. The present trilogy speaks of the operation of grace whereby we go from strength to strength to appear before God.

After this follows the Trilogy of the New Birth, which appears to be in some way connected throughout with the family of Korah, although the last two Psalms of the trilogy have the names of other singers added to their titles. For some reason or other the Korahites have incorporated the Psalms of non-Levitical authors into their own collection.

The Trilogy of the New Birth (Pss. 87.-89.).

1. The Regenerate Life of the City of God (Ps. 87.).
2. The Prisoners of Hope (Ps. 88.).
3. The Eternal Reality of the Communicated Sonship (Ps. 89.).

PSALM 84.

THE JOY OF GOD'S HOUSE

THIS Psalm was probably sung when Jehoshaphat was returning after the children of Lot and their allies had perished by mutual slaughter in the battle which the preceding Psalm of Asaph commemorates (2 Chron. xx. 28). The mysterious carnage which accomplished the deliverance of Judah took place near Hazazon Tamar, which is Engedi, near the wilderness and the Dead Sea. The valley of Baca gives a hint of its

barrenness, but here the wonderful deliverance of God made them know the place as the valley of Berachah, or blessing (2 Chron. xx. 25). The early rain symbolizes in annual fruitfulness what the miraculous deliverance also symbolized, the sudden transformation of nature's barrenness into the richness of the blessing of grace.

The Church militant triumphs not by her own power subduing the world but as Jehoshaphat triumphed, by the world's destroying itself and leaving its spoils for the faithful. They dwell in the House of God, door-keepers at the gate of Heaven. The Kingdom of Grace achieves its victories by prayer. Christ is the Door by which our prayers are to enter in, and the Divine life round about us acts as a sun and shield to illuminate and protect.

PSALM 85.

THE COVENANT OF GRACE

THIS is a Christmas Day Psalm. Well may the door-keeper of the last Psalm celebrate, however unwittingly, the birth of Him who is the Door, by whom grace and truth are come to us.

This Psalm seems to belong to the time after the captivity. It opens with an outburst of assurance in God's predestinating love. The outward change implies the removal of the sins which demanded the outward punishment. The land has enjoyed her Sabbaths. God is turned to His people. Now let His people turn to Him.

The Word of God spoke in predestination and judgement. He answered when they cried in the Egyptian bondage (Pss. 81.-82.). Now the same Word will speak in grace. He speaks in grace by becoming Incarnate.

The people must profit by their captivity to show that

they have learnt the lesson of their captivity. Then shall "Glory dwell in our Land." Our land is Thy land, O Immanuel. In Him are earth and Heaven joined together in love. God comes to earth with the gift of righteousness, and leaves us an example, so that by His grace we may accomplish true righteousness, walking in the way of His steps.

PSALM 86.

THE PRAYER OF THE RISEN MEDIATOR

"A PSALM of David," the Beloved. So the Psalm is inscribed. Probably this Psalm is ascribed to him, as being almost entirely taken out of his Psalms. We can scarcely think that David wrote it as it is.

Notice, however, that this, the only Davidic Psalm in Book III., is the fourteenth Psalm, and Fourteen is the number of David.

It is the Mediatorial Psalm of the Greater David, the Word Incarnate, Immanuel, the Lord of glory and righteousness, who has been made flesh, and is come to dwell among us.

It is an Adonaic Psalm. The name Adonai occurs in it seven times.

This name, Adonai, has a special relation to Messiah. In the mystical teaching of the ancient Jews it is through Adonai that we come to Jehovah. Their language anticipates our Lord's words, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." We must know God as our Master if we would know Him as our Life. Jesus is our Mediator, and if we come unto Him in faith, we shall have life through His Name.

This Psalm predicts with special clearness the conversion of all nations to the worship of the true God. "All nations shall glorify Thy Name." So does our Lord

speak of all authority over all nations being given to Him, wherefore He bids His apostles go forth and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into His Name.

So is the Kingdom of Grace which spreads forth with triumphant prayer from the door of the Temple of the ancient covenant perfected in restoration from Satan's bondage by the Incarnation, and extended in the Church Catholic throughout all nations of the world.

PSALM 87.

THE REGENERATE LIFE OF THE CITY OF GOD

Ps. 15. spoke of the Personal character of Messiah, whereby He was entitled, as the Son of God, to ascend unto the Holy Hill, according to the call given to Him in Ps. 2.

Now the fifteenth Psalm of Book III. sings of the glory of God's Holy Hill, and the necessity of New Birth in order to enter into that glory. Our Lord said to Nicodemus that none could enter into His Kingdom unless he were born again of water and of the Spirit (John iii.). "The fountains" of Divine life are in the Holy City, and the Lord takes account of all the citizens who have been born into its heavenly privileges, not by carnal descent, but by heavenly power, for "His foundations are upon the Holy Hills" of Divine glory, and none can ascend to dwell there save by the heavenly Divine power which comes with regenerating influence from on high. The names of all citizens must be found written in the Book of Life.

The Psalm anticipates St John's vision of the river of the Water of Life proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb (Rev. xxii. 1.). The Tabernacle of God is with man. The Lamb's Bride has the Lamb of God for

its illuminating principle and its sure foundation. The City is founded upon Him, and His foundations are rooted in the very Being of God, upon the Holy Hills. The foundation is vital, not material—a communication of inherent life, not a separate structure sustaining a super-imposed fabric.

PSALM 88.

THE PRISONERS OF HOPE

THIS Psalm is sometimes spoken of as if it were the saddest in the Psalter. That, however, is not the case. The intense gloom of earthly life is indeed consummated. The Psalm belongs to Jesus upon the Cross, but, while recapitulating the loneliness of His earthly condition and the purpose of God's Hand which weighs upon Him, He looks forward to them that are in Sheol, and asks if they are to see the wonders of God's power, "Shall Thy loving kindness be declared in the grave or Thy faithfulness in Abaddon." This question is not put forward distrustfully. It meets the question of wonder uttered upon the Cross, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" That question summed up all the mystery of earthly life and suffering. The question, uttered now, sums up the prospects of another world. "This world has seen Thine anger. Shall the next world see Thy Love?" It echoes at the end of the ministry the question of the outset. He has already said, "Who will give Thee thanks in the pit?" The speaker knows that He has come into the world for the very purpose of giving God thanks in the pit, for His soul will not be left in hell, nor will God suffer His Holy One to see corruption. So then, in this confidence, He cries ere He gives up the ghost, and He looks forward to the acceptance of His

oblation on the Easter morning. "Unto Thee, O Lord, have I cried, and in the morning shall my prayer come before Thee." The terrors which overwhelm Him are the Powers of Darkness which God has permitted to press upon Him during the three hours that He has been hanging on the tree. He has felt them, but they have not conquered Him. Now, although the Psalm says it not, He will pursue them into their own stronghold, and show Himself as Conqueror. This is the wonder to be exhibited to the faithful departed of the Old Testament, that they may "rise and praise" God (ver. 10).

The previous Psalm spoke of the regenerate life of the City of God. This speaks of the overthrow of the powers of death without which that life of the Spirit could not be obtained.

The spirits of the just men of old were to be made perfect by His death and resurrection. The general assembly and Church of the first-born whose names are written in Heaven are to be regenerated in the citizenship of the Blessed by being made partakers of the Divine Sonship set forth in the Psalm (89.) which follows.

Christ does not lift up the veil for us to see how His Blessed Spirit regenerated with illuminating grace those souls that were waiting in the silence and darkness of death for Him to come, but He went down to remove their darkness, not to endure it. The Psalm tells of His sufferings as being completed ere He bowed His Head and gave up the ghost.

All who are born into the Holy City by the power of His grace must in like manner die unto sin.

PSALM 89.

THE ETERNAL REALITY OF THE COMMUNICATED
SONSHIP

HERE we have the other side of the mystery of Christ's death presented to us. Ps. 8. had called the predestinated Son of Man to set up His glory above the heavens, and Ps. 80. had called upon God to restore the inheritors of His Covenant love, quickening them to give praise to His Name by looking upon the Son of Man whom He had made so strong for Himself. Our present Psalm points to the heavens, the Kingdom of Heaven, beginning upon earth, but expanding in everlasting glory, the City of God which has foundations of living power upon the Holy Hills.

He whose life is founded upon the Holy Hills does not perish in death. By dying He conquers death. "God's faithfulness is recorded in the grave," and now "His faithfulness is established in the heavens," for there is the Book of Life, and the new birth of each one of the faithful is recorded therein. In hell is the record of vengeance. In Heaven is the record of grace. In hell is the manifestation of Divine faithfulness, triumphantly to deliver those who are waiting for it (Ps. 88. 11). In Heaven God's faithfulness is established in the security of eternal life (verse 2).

The covenant of a new Birth whereby all nations are to receive a blessing through incorporation into the Seed of Abraham is now fulfilled. God speaks of the promised Redeemer, the Son, the King whom He has set upon His Holy Hill of Zion, "He shall call Me: Thou art My Father, My God, and the Rock of My salvation. Also I will make Him My First-born, higher than the kings of the earth" (verses 26, 27).

Thus does the First-born of God take up the promised

inheritance of David. The Psalm contains the vision of Nathan (verse 19). Man has not been created in vain, as a natural review of the world might seem to suggest (verse 49). Man is glorified in Christ, crying out, Abba, Father.

Wonderful is the exultation of faith. A human composition would have paused here, acknowledging the glory of saving grace. The inspired Psalmist goes on to speak of its responsibility.

Now are we the sons of God in Christ, but we must be holy as our Father is holy, and "pass the time of our sojourning here in fear" (1 Pet. i. 17).

The Psalmist accordingly proceeds to contrast the faithfulness of God with, alas! the continuing unfaithfulness of man. He sees that they will yet "break His statutes and not keep His commandments" (verse 31). The Psalm has a wail which cannot cease while earth remains. There is a sadder desolation than that which awaited Solomon's Temple, as the Temple of Christ is more glorious than the Temple of Solomon. Sad vision of Christendom falling away from the high prerogatives of martyr-triumph, Christendom still failing to "know the things which belong unto her peace," even though she has these heavenly graces as her present possession, that she may in the strength thereof press onward to her eternal glory.

Immanuel! God with us! Our Divine Sonship in Christ.

The greater and the more certain our hope, so much the greater and more necessary is to us the obedience of faith, that we come not short of it.

BOOK IV

THIS Book, like the previous one, contains seventeen Psalms.

Book III. was devoted to setting forth Christ's life in us.

Book IV. celebrates the Kingdom of Messiah, or our life in Him.

Messiah comes into the world to be a King, bearing witness to the truth in sovereign power, whereby He exalts His people out of the slavery of a deceptive creation, the kingdom of falsehood, wherein they were bound under the tyranny of the Prince of Darkness.

It opens with a Decad of royal inauguration, three trilogies of progress, followed by the acclamations of a Ter Sanctus, to Him who sits upon the Cherubic Throne.

The Trilogy of Redemption

1. The Bondage of Vanity (Ps. 90.).
2. The Divinely-Guarded Warrior (Ps. 91.).
3. The Exaltation (Ps. 92.).

PSALM 90.

THE BONDAGE OF VANITY

THIS is a Psalm of Moses.

As the law of bondage was preparatory to the Gospel of filial freedom in Christ, so it is fitting that a Psalm of the ancient law-giver should prepare for the promised and

PSALM 90.

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greater Prophet who was to come and rule "as a Son over His own House."

This Psalm is an outburst of praise from mankind at large, from human nature, recognizing God as the true home of our affections from whom our strength is derived.

In Ps. 89. the Son of God was pleading His long-continued Passion through ages of unbelief while He "bore in His bosom the rebukes of many peoples." He gathered the peoples into His bosom, so that in His members throughout successive ages He suffers all the blasphemies of such as revile the Divine Covenant. Now we have the ancient law-giver speaking. He too, according to the measure of the Old Covenant, bore in his bosom the burden of the germinant congregation, the chosen typical people of God. From that legislation of the Exodus, the Kingdom of the regenerate Sonship takes its rise.

This Psalm contrasts man's feebleness with God's power. Yet should that contrast be to us an encouragement. Man ought to know himself as living truly only in God. Dust shall return to dust, but God is the dwelling-place of the soul, and shall not the soul created in God's Image rejoice when called to return to God who gave it? If it has been true to God's Image it must rejoice. God does not say, Depart. He says, Return. Here we seem to have an intimation of the future life beyond the mere silence of Sheol, though poor man, the frail body, pass away into crushing. In the Kingdom of Christ we, as living in Him, should regard death only as a stage of the return to God. Jesus, the spotless Son of God, the express Image of His glory, returns to His God and our God, that He may bring His redeemed also along with Himself to God. He could not "leave the world and go to the Father" unless He had first "come forth from the Father and come into the world." He had to

annihilate Himself by clothing Himself with our bondage of vanity. Otherwise He could not have redeemed us from it.

But the clothing with vanity did not destroy the Substance of the Divine Personality. He returns to God as no man else could return, for He, as the Consubstantial Son, abides with the Father in an eternal unity which no one else possessed. Others came up from the womb of Creation. He comes forth from the glory of God. He returns to that glory. In His Kingdom He unites us to Himself, that we in Him may return not to nothingness but truly to God.

PSALM 91.

THE DIVINELY-GUARDED WARRIOR

THE Son of God became Incarnate in order to struggle with Satan in the weakness of our flesh. Ps. 3. told of His entrance upon the struggle. Ps. 18. sings of the march of Divine power with which He comes from on high. Ps. 20. contains the welcome of His people who are looking for His deliverance. Our present Psalm exhibits Him to us in His Personal encounter with the enemy. On cherub chariot He came down. Now angels wait to minister to Him when the accomplished struggle will allow of their coming forward to strengthen His human frame. They do not assist Him in His struggle. He must tread the winepress of God's wrath and destroy His enemies by His own inherent power, but angels shall wait upon Him. He does not exist among the creatures by a charmed life, but in real unity of being with them in their weakness, so as to be capable of receiving their external co-operation. His acts, though filled with Divine power, are wrought through created instrumentality. Therefore He is nourished with food as other creatures,

and is subject to Divine Providence as other creatures. The difference between Him and them in relationship to God consists in the integrity wherewith He sets His love upon God. Therefore He experiences the full protection of Divine Providence which others fail to do, not because God fails in caring for them, but because they do not set their love upon Him.

PSALM 92.

THE VICTORIOUS SABBATH

THIS is a song of the Sabbath Day. It praises God for the repose which is obtained by the victory of Christ, resting from His work of redemption as God rested of old from the work of creation.

This Psalm tells therefore of the repose in the grave, when Satan is conquered, not of the jubilant triumph of the next day in the glory of resurrection. The conquest of Satan is to be distinguished from the manifestation of Divine glory which follows. The victory is won, but this is the song of the battle-field ere the return of the victorious army shall begin. The next Psalm will tell of putting on the brilliant garments of the resurrection.

This Psalm sets before us the victorious character of our buried life in Christ. We read of Jehoshaphat's great victory that "they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much" (2 Chron. xx. 25). These three typical days apparently include the life of Christ's Body during the period of expectation. The victory has been won for us, but we have to be still collecting the spoil. The third day includes our life on earth. "On the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of Berachah or blessing." That fourth day represents the general judgement and the manifestation of the heavenly Jerusalem. Our present life, although a risen one by fellow-

ship of grace with the risen Saviour, is still a buried one. So St Paul speaks of the Sabbatism which was remaining for the people of God.

"The righteous shall flourish like a palm-tree." This indicates the barrenness of earth in which the living power of the victory of grace is being manifested. The Tamar, the date-palm, brings forth its abundant fruit in the desert where no other tree is found. Such is the fruitfulness of the Cross in this world of death. "He shall grow as the cedar in Lebanon." Such is the glory of the life that is to follow. The cedar is the emblem of immortality, but not of fruitfulness. The cedar supplies in this world the fragrant and imperishable timbers of the Temple. But it supplies these by its own death. So must we bring forth the fruit of the palm in this world of death, and we must be dead, like the cedar, to this world if we would be built up in the Temple of God and flourish like the cedar in the glory of the life to come.

The Trilogy of Enthronement

1. The Glory of the Resurrection Body (Ps. 93.).
2. The Vengeance Threatened (Ps. 94.).
3. The Invitation to enter into His Rest (Ps. 95.).

This trilogy follows naturally upon the last. The Son of God has come into the bondage of our vanity to fulfil the law. The Song of Moses is His welcome. He comes as the Warrior on whom angels wait, while He treads upon the lion and the adder. He conquers Satan and gathers the blessed ones that were waiting for Him into the repose of His bright Paradise.

Now follows the Resurrection. He comes forth from the Edom of the grave, glorious in His apparel. They who would not obey Him must bear His vengeance. He calls the faithful to enter into His rest. That rest is the blessedness of a life dead to the world. We must

share that life with Christ if we are to go on along with Him to the glory of the life that is to follow. He is enthroned in the Kingdom of Grace, the Kingdom of Truth. The faithful must come to Him with obedience, not hardening their hearts like the people of the older Covenant.

PSALM 93.

THE GLORY OF THE RESURRECTION-BODY

THE Royal Warrior appears before us, clothed in the glorious apparel of the Resurrection. Having conquered Satan, He now takes the throne of Creation prepared for Him of old as the Incarnate Heir of all things. Mankind in their rebellion are as raging floods, but the seas will be hushed by His Sovereignty. This is the Lord's day of triumph, and this is the Psalm which wakens the Lord's day in the appointed office for Lauds in a large portion of the Church.

PSALM 94.

THE VENGEANCE THREATENED

HERE we have the cry of the Church looking forward to the day of vengeance, when the faithful shall receive their reward. The souls under the altar are crying out, Lord, how long shall our blood be unavenged? (Rev. viii. 10.). The Church militant has to bear the oppression of the ungodly while the course of this world continues as it is, but we have to accept the burden acknowledging the blessedness which accrues to us by the Lord's chastening. The ungodly meanwhile are digging a pit for their own destruction. "The throne of wickedness which frameth mischief by statute" has no part in the Kingdom of the risen Lord. They must be "cut off in their own iniquity."

PSALM 95.

THE INVITATION TO ENTER INTO THE TRUE REST

THE King here gives warning to His people to take heed, while waiting, that we fail not of the Divine rest whereinto He is gathering His people.

We must acknowledge the Lord our God as the true Shepherd of Israel, and our hearts must so abide with Him as to enter by faith into the rest of this blessed Sabbath of grace. Though we are outwardly marching through the wilderness, our life as we lie hid with Him, is a life of sweetness, tasting of His grace. "He leads us forth beside the waters of rest." (Ps. 23. 2). Our life is a double one. Outwardly we have to suffer at the hands of the world, but we must keep our hearts tender in the recognition of His love, so that we may know the blessedness of the Kingdom to which we belong.

The Kingdom of Grace with its expectant tranquillity now bursts forth in the new song of a new world. The Ark of the Lord is to be carried triumphantly to the throne, the archetype of that which David led in procession of old. The old ark is here no more, but we are called to claim our part in the heavenly Jerusalem, for now the Tabernacle of the Lord is with men.

Now then follows the Trilogy of the New Song.

1. The Righteous Judge (Ps. 96.).
2. The All-Holy King (Ps. 97.).
3. The Welcome of Jesus (Ps. 98.).

PSALM 96.

THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGE

THIS is a call to mankind to accept the invitation and heed the warning which has just been given. The call is addressed now not to a solitary nation, but to all the

world. If we would have our part with the people of God, we must sing the new song of the new life, the song not of worldly triumph but of regenerate power, the song which the Holy Ghost teacheth.

All are called to rise up and welcome the Lord coming in glory to exercise judgement. They who have entered with tender hearts into the worship of faith will now exult in the attainment of all their aspirations. But we have to be living with hearts uplifted to the Lord so as to be prepared for that final outburst of song. The ungodly who have hardened their hearts in earthliness must now hear the word, Depart. All earthly power ceases. The Lord is Judge. He judgeth in righteousness and truth.

PSALM 97.

THE ALL-HOLY KING

THE call to joyful song in the power of the Holy Ghost is continued. The victorious God-Man, "having received His heavenly Kingdom," is "coming again" into the world (Heb. i. 6). The last Psalm tells of His judgement separating the ungodly from the faithful. Now He comes in Divine Sovereignty, and all the powers of nature give way before His celestial manifestation. "All things of the earth shall be dissolved" (2 Pet. iii. 11). The gods of the heathen who have exercised diabolical powers, holding men bound by their frauds, are manifested in their nothingness. All the gods, *i.e.* all angel powers, are to worship Christ the King.

All who love the Lord as they look forward to this manifestation must hate all that is evil. None can rejoice in the holiness of that Kingdom who are not preparing in holiness for it. The Kingdom of Grace is the time of preparation.

PSALM 98.

THE WELCOME OF JESUS

THIS glorious King is Jesus the Saviour. "All the ends of the world have seen the Salvation of our God."

The proclamation of the new song is continued. The holiness of the kingdom now manifested upon the earth is not the original holiness in which the heavenly hierarchies were created. It is something greater than that. It is the holiness of Salvation, the righteousness of God, "the salvation which His own Right Hand and His holy arm wrought out" upon the Cross. The King who is the Saviour comes to be the Judge. His Kingdom is the Kingdom of the truth. His judgement is the judgement of righteousness. He is the law of righteousness to His people. Their salvation consists in union with Himself.

So does Ps. 98., which is the final clarion-blast in honour of the returning King, close this trilogy. He whose Ascension was sung from choir to choir of the heavenly host in Ps. 24. comes again into the world with the glory of the Father, and the holy angels are with Him. Thus shall He sit upon the throne of His glory (Matt. xxv. 31).

This Novena of Redemption, Enthronement, and Judgement is closed by the solemn Psalm of Adoration, which has been rightly called the Ter Sanctus of the Psalter.

This Psalm must stand alone.

PSALM 99.

THE TER SANCTUS

THIS is the culminating acknowledgement of King Messiah as the Son of God, for He is the Holy One

of Israel. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John xiv. 9). To behold Him as when Isaiah saw His glory is to know Him in the living power of the Triune Godhead.

He reigns upon the Cherubic Throne in the Name of the Eternal Father (verse 3).

He reigns as having wrought judgement and righteousness in Jacob, and therefore all men are to bow before the footstool of the Crucified.

He reigns in the power of the Holy Ghost by whom He called forth priests and prophets of old. By this power He exercised forgiveness even while He executed vengeance. In this power His people must now rise up to give Him the worship which is due to Him upon His Holy Hill.

So must His work wrought upon earth be acknowledged by spiritual homage in the glory of Heaven.

He is "the Lord our God." The Lord is that Spirit by whom God is revealed in the heart; and "no man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost." We must live in Him with His life if we are to know His truth. Our life in Christ culminates in the glory of the Beatific vision.

Ps. 99., as the Psalm of highest glorification, corresponds with Ps. 51., as the Psalm of primary humiliation. They divide the hundred and fifty Psalms of the Psalter in an opposite manner. The first Fifty-one leave Ninety-nine to tell of the Divine development. Now the Fifty-one Psalms which follow Ps. 99. tell of the world-wide glory of the Heavenly King. At the outset of the Psalter three Seventeens telling of human probation are crowned by the Incarnation. Now at the close three Seventeens of Divine life celebrate the coronation of grace.

The remaining Heptad of this Book describes the Kingdom wherein Christ reigns supreme.

PSALM 100.

THE SUMMONS OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

THE King is the Creator of all the world, and therefore all lands are called to rejoice before Him. His Church is Catholic. The Lord Christ must be acknowledged as Creator and Preserver. We must come into His courts with thankfulness, for the Lord of Nature is the Lord of Grace. His Kingdom is the Kingdom of the Truth.

This Psalm is a sort of Respond to the Hymn of the Thrice Holy. It serves as an introduction to the two remaining trilogies.

Now follows the Trilogy of Sanctification.

1. The Kingdom of Truth (Ps. 101.)
2. The Penitential Discipline of the Church (Ps. 102.).
3. The Final Glory of the Covenant (Ps. 103.).

PSALM 101.

THE KINGDOM OF TRUTH

NONE can have their part in Messiah's Kingdom who have not the Word of God abiding in them (John viii. 38). "Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ," and the people of Christ are to be "sanctified through the truth."

The kingdom of the world is a kingdom of outsides, phenomena, conventional appearances. The new Kingdom is a Kingdom of interior reality, substantive and unchangeable. The one is to please man. The other is a life that makes melody to the Lord.

PSALM 102.

THE PENITENTIAL DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH

IF we know the truth of God we must also know our own sinfulness, how far we come short of it. If the last

Psalm is not to be a self-righteous boast, it must be followed by a Psalm of penitence. If we come before God and contemplate His holy glory we must, like Isaiah, cry out, "Woe is me" (Isa. vi. 5).

The wail of this Psalm is not because of outward devastation coming upon the city, but because of sin devastating the heart in spite of its holy desires. The Psalmist sees himself in his misery as he pours out his meditation before God. So he contrasts his own weak changefulness with the glory of the King, Creator, Judge, Unchangeable, having life in Himself and giving eternal life to the generations of the faithful.

As a child of earth he can claim no part in the Kingdom of Truth. Perishing and penitent he comes to the King of Truth, that he who by nature is one of the sons of death may be established before Him (verse 29) in the eternal Kingdom.

PSALM 103.

THE FINAL GLORY OF THE COVENANT

THE regenerate soul finding now its sins forgiven pours forth its praise to God. We have therefore a grateful song for the Divine gifts (verse 2), forgiveness and healing (verse 3), redemption, glorification (verse 4), the beatitude of heavenly contemplation (verse 5). The ways made known unto Moses, and the fatherly discipline of Providential government, shall lead onward to the everlasting righteousness of Messiah (Dan. ix. 24), which shall be the glory of the New Covenant. That Covenant of the heavenly Kingdom shall lift man up to the glory of the heavenly life. God's goodness is eternal in its action towards His creatures as it is eternal in Himself.

Messiah enthroned in our nature on high is the Lord to whom all the hosts of Heaven must give blessing. The

threefold blessing of the heavenly hierarchies wakens the soul of the penitent thus renewed in Christ, to utter a kindred voice of blessing (verses 20-22).

The trilogy which follows is the first outburst of the endless Halleluyah. "A people which shall be created shall praise Jah" (Ps. 102. 20). So from the depth of penitence welled up that voice of praise which should be the brightness of the Psalter in its subsequent utterances. None could say Halleluyah unless they were "created anew." It belongs to the children of God alone to utter this praise. Human lips may utter the word, but no human holiness can avail to its power. It can only be uttered by a life renewed in Divine holiness by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Fitly does a Trilogy of Halleluyahs consummate this Book of the Psalter which tells of our life with Christ in God.

Halleluyatic Trilogy of the Development of the Kingdom.

1. The Divine Presence operative under the Veil of the Original Creation (Ps. 104.).
2. The Divine Sonship vindicated by the Judgements on Egypt (105.).
3. The Divine Purpose abiding in spite of Man's Unfaithfulness (Ps. 106.).

How must we praise God for the life which He gives to us in His Kingdom! He created us out of nothing. He redeemed us to be His own people with the Messianic glory for our inheritance. If we have not risen up to that glory, the fault is not His but ours. He is training us so that He may fit us in the end.

PSALM 104.

THE DIVINE PRESENCE OPERATIVE UNDER THE
VEIL OF THE ORIGINAL CREATION

THE Psalmist contemplating God's works in creation regards the outer world as having been formed with a view to a final glorification in Christ. A review of creation following the steps of the Mosaic cosmogony serves to show the power of the Creator, and the nothingness of all created things upon the earth. If God "take away their breath they die and return to their dust." He has but to "send forth His Spirit and they shall be created, and He will renew the face of the earth." So shall this perishing world become a new world "enduring for ever in the glory of God while He rejoices over His works." So does Messiah take an everlasting Kingdom. "All things were created by Him and for Him" (Col. i. 16). "The earth shall be full of His glory" (Isa. vi. 3).

PSALM 105.

THE DIVINE SONSHIP VINDICATED BY THE JUDGE-
MENTS ON EGYPT

THE beginning of the new creation was in the promised Seed of Abraham. Isaac was born, as it were, from the dead. "The sons of Jacob, His chosen," have the Lord for their God.

According to His promise, God delivered them from Egypt, sending manifold judgements upon their oppressors, and this Psalm must be sung with continual remembrance that God will always be faithful to His Covenant to deliver us if we will look to Him. But He had a moral purpose then, and He has the same now. He desires to perfect us in righteousness. He brought them out of their oppression, that He might give them a

law, and this law they were to keep. Yes! This "law was the school-master to bring them to Christ" (Gal. iii. 24). "He gave them the lands of the heathen," that there they might glorify Him by their obedience. They must show themselves to be His children.

PSALM 106.

THE DIVINE PURPOSE ABIDING IN SPITE OF MAN'S UNFAITHFULNESS

THE Book closes with a record of the manifold unfaithfulness by which the chosen people marred the redemptive triumph of God.

How short-lived was the praise which they sang by the Red Sea. They murmured for food. They repudiated the messenger whom God had sent. They fell into the idolatry of the calf. They scorned the land of promise. They joined in the sensual orgies of heathen worship. They involved Moses in sin by their rebellion. They did not exercise God's commission to exterminate the heathen from the land which He gave them, but learnt the abominations of the nations round about, polluting the land with their blood.

So they brought themselves into continual oppression by way of punishment, and God has continually delivered them when they cried to Him.

These continual deliverances point to that greater deliverance which shall be an eternal one when Messiah comes. So then must our praise rise up to Him with confident hope. The Book closes with Halleluyah, for though man has been thus unfaithful, God will manifest the glory of His Name in the new creation. God and His people shall be joined together in everlasting love. "All the people shall say, Amen." "We shall be for ever with the Lord (1 Thess. iv. 17).

BOOK V

SONGS OF THE REDEEMED

THE last two Books have set before us the song of God's people. That song began with the Asaphite memories of Ephraim's pre-eminence, and the substitution of David to be the supernatural Head of the people by irrevocable promise, the Divine election superseding the human probation which had failed of its end (Pss. 73.-83.). The sweet songs of the Korahites carried on the strain, setting forth the regenerate character of the New Covenant. The up-lifting of the regenerate to a life hid with Christ in God was the subject of Book IV. The Redeemer's personal struggle with Satan opened the Book in a trilogy ending with a Sabbatical Psalm (Pss. 90.-92.). After this shone forth the Trilogy of the Lord's Day, the King revealed in Resurrection glory (Pss. 93.-95.), and at length descending in judgement (Pss. 96.-98.).

We pause before the Triune glory (Ps. 99.), and then all mankind are summoned to the Kingdom of grace and truth round the shepherd of Israel, coming into His courts with praise (Ps. 100.). Penitence and praise prepare for the Halleluyah which recounts God's dealings in Creation and Redemption, although frustrated by the carnal heart of the recipients (Pss. 104.-106.).

The remaining Book, which opens with an Introductory Psalm to praise God for His goodness to the sons of

men, closes with the absorption of all intelligences into the praise worthy of God, which comes from those alone who have the Spirit of God. "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord!"

So does this Book set forth the life of Sanctification.

Fifteen is a prominent number in this Book. There are fifteen Psalms of David, fifteen Gradual Psalms. Ps. 136., which is sometimes called the Great Hallel, comes like an answer to Ps. 135., and is itself the first Psalm of the last Quindecad.

The fourteenth Psalm in each of the previous Books was Davidic. In this Book it is not inscribed as his, but it may be. It is explained in the A.V. as a prayer of David against Doeg. It is emphasized as being the first of the Gradual Psalms, four of which are ascribed to him and the central Psalm of the series to Solomon.

Twelve Halleluyah Psalms resound through this Book with the fulness of their praise. They begin with the renewed Exodus of humanity in the Paschal Hymn, praising the enthroned Son of David who is exalted as a Priest after the order of Melchizedek. In Book IV. the penitent children of the Kingdom, according to the aspiration of Ps. 102. 18, celebrate the initial goodness of the Creator and the development of redeeming love in a closing Trilogy of Halleluyahs the joy of faith, though they have still to hush their hopes in the acknowledgement of human feebleness. The enthroned Redeemer opens Heaven (Ps. 110.) and the children of the Resurrection burst forth in two Trilogies of Halleluyah, whose character is emphasized by the insertion of a Psalm which records the natural manifestation of God's redeeming power in the original Exodus from Egypt. The Gradual Psalms culminate in another Halleluyah as their resting-place, the last Halleluyah, as it were, of earthly progress, preparatory to the thanksgiving of the

great Hallel (Ps. 136.). This Hallel, however, is the expression of thankfulness for redeeming love, as distinguished from the simplicity of adoring praise. The Octave of this Thanksgiving is the closing, culminating song of Davidic victory (Ps. 144.) which swells out in a grand Septuor with a final Pentateuch of Halleluyahs, as if to show that the law of Moses is perfectly fulfilled in the archetypal glory of the heavenly Hill, where Messiah, born under the law, gathers the redeemed people round about Himself, born anew by grace into the true life of God.

Thus do the Redeemed find themselves established in the City of God whither they would go. The door is opened that no man may shut. This is the City whose walls are Salvation and her gates Praise. This is the City of the Redeemed, for Jesus is to them a wall round about, the salvation in whom they are secure, the praise which gives exercise to their life made complete in Him by the power of the Holy Ghost.

The Praise-Psalm (Tehillah) Ps. 145. which gives a title to the whole collection as five Books of Praise-Psalms (Tehillim), being itself by its name akin to the Halleluyahs, is a call to the outburst of the concluding five.

Book I. seems to culminate in the Mysterious Advent (Ps. 18.), the Trilogy of Victorious Struggle (Pss. 22.-24.), the Acceptable Sacrifice (Ps. 40.).

Book II. gathers round the Song of Espousals (Ps. 45.), the Incarnation in the likeness of sinful flesh (Ps. 51.), the Kingdom of Peace (Ps. 72.). It sets forth the strength of the Divine Sonship which makes Messiah accepted in the patient accomplishment of God's will, during His earthly ministration.

Book III. looks inward, and is specially marked by the Psalm of Discipline (Ps. 78.), the restoration of the devastated vine (Ps. 80.), the recognition of the Divine

Sonship of the Redeemer who has conquered the Powers of Darkness (Ps. 89.).

Book IV. sets before us the heavenly side of this mysterious struggle, angels waiting upon Messiah during His struggle with the serpent (Ps. 91.), the glory of the Eternal Trinity which is the life of His Kingdom (Ps. 99.), the Trilogy of Halleluyahs which commemorate the predestinating love of the Creator. That love cannot fail of its purpose (Pss. 104.-106.).

Book V. presents Messiah to us enthroned as the High Priest of the new and universal Covenant (Ps. 110.). A continuous peal of glories begins with the Egyptian Hallel (Pss. 111.-118.). The strain of song advances in the midst of all the Church militant by the Way of Life (Ps. 119.), and the stair of the Temple (Pss. 120.-134.), to bless God along with the Beloved One for the victory that has been won. The Great Hallel (Ps. 136.), consummates the Egyptian Hallel with the glory of the heavenly triumph. Songs of praise proclaim that man has attained his predestined sovereignty in the heavenly Jerusalem. Happy are the people who have the Incarnate Lord for their God (Ps. 144.). Halleluyahs must ring from the height of Heaven to the depth of earth, and the whole universe is called to sing Halleluyah in the power of the Eternal Spirit (Pss. 144.-150.).

PSALM 107.

INTRODUCTORY

A MEMORIAL SONG OF PRAISE ON BEHALF OF THE REDEEMED

THIS is the Psalm of the sons of men, and it is noticeable that the numerical value of the words which constitute its refrain, "sons of men" = 107.

The idea of redemption is carried beyond the national limits of the ancient Exodus. The remembrance of the typical germ underlies this act of world-wide gratitude, but the scope of the Psalm is universal. It belongs to the Catholic Church, the world-wide sovereignty of Messiah. The Redeemed are from all lands. The true songs of Redemption cannot be limited to any partial area of Divine Blessing. The Egyptian Redemption had no sanctifying power, although it was effected in honour of the indwelling Presence of the predestinated Humanity which was to be born of the stock of Abraham. The new Redemption is full of sanctification, for it is wrought in the power of the Holy Ghost, and we share therein from whatever race we may be born, because we are incorporated into the Body, and are regenerated by the life, of the Divine Redeemer.

Thus we see the difference between this Psalm and the preceding. Ps. 106. refers to the Egyptian deliverance and testifies to failure. Ps. 107. speaks of universal redemption. This is the offer of God's redeeming love to all mankind. "The City of Habitation" to which He calls them can be none other than "the City whose builder and maker is God Himself" (Heb. ii. 10). The old city was of their own building. The new City is that which God has prepared for them, and nothing can enter therein save that which is holy as Himself.

Trilogy of Redeeming Power

1. The Redeemer exulting in Victory (Ps. 108.).
2. The Wrath of the Lamb (Ps. 109.).
3. The Priest upon His Throne (Ps. 110.).

PSALM 108.

THE REDEEMER EXULTING IN VICTORY

THIS Psalm is formed out of two others, Pss. 57. and 60. The Trilogy of the Crucifixion and the Song of Resurrection-triumph are thus found echoing on, for indeed it is the Passion and Resurrection of Christ which are the very substance of redeeming agency. The Redeemer appeals to the Eternal Father to show His glory over all the earth, and praises God for His victory over these nations with whom He has to contend, typified by the enemies of Israel as Israel was herself a type of His own redeemed people.

PSALM 109.

THE WRATH OF THE LAMB

THE Redeemer appears as Judge. The tenderness of redeeming love burst forth (verses 1-5), but it is only met by hatred. That hatred must recoil upon those who yield themselves up to it. The severity of Divine Justice against those who repudiate the redemption cannot be hushed. Divine love cannot soften the recoil of their deeds of hatred upon those who chose to hate. Love would have welcomed them, but the greatness of the love only serves to manifest and magnify the bitterness of their antagonism. Judah, the redeemed nation of old, is the special object of the Divine vengeance. The apostle who bears the national name, which ought to have been a pledge of faithfulness to God, is the personification of the Apostate Community, Judas.

From the national overthrow the Poor One is delivered. In Him the supernatural promises made to Abraham and David shall have their fulfilment. The Psalm is the utterance of the Redeemer in the greatness

of Divine power; and at the same time, the Redeemer is one with the poor man whose cause is thus terribly avenged against his unrighteous judges (verse 31).

PSALM 110.

THE PRIEST UPON HIS THRONE

THE Redeemer who has to imprecate the Divine vengeance against those who will not receive Him is called to be the High Priest upon the throne of God. Here He has to minister on behalf of the faithful, as our Lord said, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those whom Thou hast given Me." Those who would only meet redeeming love with hatred are left to suffer according to their hatred. Being ascended, He receives the Kingdom for which He went away. During the interval of His absence He is ever living, a Priest upon His throne, to make intercession for those whom the Father has given Him. He waits until His enemies are made His footstool. His ascended Body, glorified in the Holy Ghost, communicates the Divine Love to those who are incorporated therein.

The throne of Triune glory shone out before us as the central power of the Messianic Kingdom, eliciting the homage of Ps. 99.

Now Messiah, the Poor One of earth (Ps. 109. 31) has been summoned to sit upon that throne as Mediator and Redeemer and High Priest, after the order of Melchizedek (Ps. 110.).

Halleluyahs follow upon this exaltation.

There seems to be an Octave of praise to JAH for His triumph, the six Psalms which constitute the Hallel and two others that are preparatory. This is an Octave of praise to the Priest and King. "He has stricken him that was head over the wide country" of the whole

world. He came on purpose that He might bruise the serpent's head.

The fourth Psalm of this Octave is not a Halleluyah Psalm, but serves to emphasize the Halleluyah trilogies.

The eighth also is not a Halleluyah Psalm. It is a Hodu Psalm, a Psalm of thanksgiving, like Ps. 136., which, though it is the great Hallel, is not a Halleluyah Psalm.

We come, then, to the Halleluyatic Trilogy of the Accepted Covenant.

1. The Eucharistic Memorial of the Everlasting Covenant (Ps. 111.)
2. The Christ-conformity of the Redeemed (Ps. 112.).
3. The Divine Seed gathered out of all Nations (Ps. 113.).

These expand the priestly idea of Ps. 110.

PSALM 111.

THE EUCHARISTIC MEMORIAL OF THE EVER- LASTING COVENANT

THIS fitly follows the Psalm of the Mediatorial enthronement, for it is recognized by the great commentators as having reference to the Holy Eucharist, the covenanted presentation of the heavenly Victim under earthly form. The Redeemer gives us the memorial food of the Covenant, the Body which suffered under the chase (verse 5) of such fierce persecutors. Thus the Divine Melchizedek meets and blesses the children of faithful Abraham.

PSALM 112.

THE CHRIST-CONFORMITY OF THE REDEEMED

Psalm 112. is constructed in close similarity of form with the preceding. It sets forth the blessed conformity of the Redeemed to the Divine goodness, the

righteousness of God in Christ. "His righteousness abideth for ever." This line occurs three times in these two Psalms, emphasizing the sanctifying and glorifying power of the righteousness inherent in Christ and communicated to His members.

These two Psalms which have Halleluyah at the beginning are the introduction to the Egyptian Hallel, which was sung at the three great Feasts and at the Feast of Dedication and at the New Moons.

PSALM 113.

THE DIVINE SEED GATHERED FROM ALL NATIONS

THIS Psalm closes the trilogy which we have been considering, and forms the commencement of the Hallel. It is a song of praise to God for His mercy, not to the Jews themselves in particular, but with wider scope embracing all the nations of the earth. Human nature is that barren woman who is to be a mother of children, the barren woman of whom Isaiah speaks (Isa. liv. 1). The loved Rachel is the true mother of the children of Bethlehem. They are the children not of earthly but of Divine joy. Though they die "they shall come again to their own border" in better life.

PSALM 114.

IN EXITU ISRAEL

MEMORY gratefully reads the glorious destinies of the present, as the secret of the wonderful interpositions of the past. Halleluyahs belong to present life, not to the phenomenal miracles of the past. This Psalm is not a Halleluyah Psalm. It is a retrospect of wonder at God's doings of old. That old redemption is commemorated as a pledge of a deliverance yet greater. This Psalm is

an act of faith that the Divine Presence which caused those convulsions of nature will assert itself in yet nobler manifestations. Messiah's Kingdom is to be developed with yet greater issues. The sea, the Jordan, the quaking earth and the torrent-yielding rocks of Horeb and Kadesh acknowledged the Divine Presence. The marvels of the march have ceased, but the Name of God abides with the covenant people. This Name is a living Name which calls for God to vindicate His glory.

Pss. 113., 114. were sung by the Jews in their houses before emptying the second festal cup. Ps. 115.-118. were sung after filling the fourth cup.

The Psalm of the Redemptive Presence is followed by the Trilogy of Eternal Life.

1. The Living God (Ps. 115.).
2. The Life of the Saints beyond the Grave (Ps. 116.).
3. The Halleluyah of the Universal Church (Ps. 117.).

PSALM 115.

THE LIVING GOD

THE Presence of God with His people is the presence of a lifegiving Name. "Our God is in Heaven," therefore our covenant with Him is a covenant of heavenly life. Three times: "Our help and our shield." Three times: "He will bless." Three times: "Jehovah." Three times: "JAH."

PSALM 116.

THE LIFE OF THE SAINTS BEYOND THE GRAVE

AS we have the life of God, we cannot fear death. Death does not destroy the life of the redeemed. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." The power He has manifested for their de-

liverance is a pledge of continued care in watching over them. He will not suffer them to die, unless death shall really be to them an advancement in glory. The Psalmist anticipates the apostle: "Death cannot separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom. viii. 38).

PSALM 117.

THE HALLELUYAH OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

ALL nations are summoned to praise the Lord. It is a summons brief and powerful, echoing the invitation of Ps. 100. This Psalm rings like a bell. Our Lord's commission given to the apostles, to make disciples of all nations by reason of the universal authority given to Himself (Matt. xxviii. 19), is the great event which it calls the nations to welcome with praise and thankfulness.

The Ascension of Messiah to take His place as the Royal Priest in Heaven seems to form a terminus of thought, so that the forty remaining Psalms of Redemption are to set forth the progress of Redemption in the history of His people upon earth. Redemption is one continuous work, beginning with Egypt, and swelling forth in heavenly glory round the throne of the High Priest until the whole universe in the great day of Redemption resounds with the Divine manifestation of Messiah's triumph.

The Egyptian Hallel is the preparatory movement. Including the two Psalms of introduction, we have here an Octave, closing with Ps. 118. This is the Psalm of the Triumph of JAH.

We can scarcely help noticing how the Pss. 15., 16., 17., 18., 19. correspond with Pss. 115., 116., 117., 118., 119.

The triumphant Ps. 118. brings us to the long Psalm

of the Way of Life in the observance of God's law (Ps. 119.), and then the Graduals form a heavenly stair of fifteen steps. By this ascent we come to the Trilogy of the Presence Chamber (Pss. 135.-137.).

The progress is thus continuous. In this Presence Chamber the Great Hallel is sung and the final vengeance invoked against Babylon and Edom.

The Great Hallel is itself the first Psalm of the final Quindecad.

PSALM 118.

THE TRIUMPH OF JAH

A GLORIOUS Octave Psalm! It is the crowning Psalm of the Hallel. It tells of "the Stone which was set at nought of the builders." That Stone is become the Head of the Corner. Christ's priesthood is the foundation upon which all ministrations must rest. The Octave Psalm, therefore, points to the High Priest ascended into the heavens. The heavenly Temple and all its ministrations must rest upon this High Priest, the Divine Messiah, as their foundation (verse 22). Upon the Rock of the Divine Sonship the Church was to be built. He Himself is also the Gate by whom the righteous are to enter in (verse 20). "The way into the Holiest is made open by the Blood of Christ" (Heb. x. 19).

Here in a manner like Ps. 115. we have intimations of the Triune life. Three times: "Mercy for ever." Three times: "In the Name of the Lord." Three times: "The Right Hand of the Lord." Three times: "JAH." Three times: "Jehovah." Again nine times: "Jehovah."

When Israel of old came out of Egypt they were not to touch the mountain lest they should die. Now that Jesus is ascended, no longer, like Joshua, a minister of Moses, attending him while he goes up, but Himself

to be the High Priest of the living Covenant, we must ascend the mountain in order that we may partake of His Life. We cannot know that Life, the triumph of JAH, while we remain below. This Octave is the regenerating redemption.

"The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." Now that Christ is come we are no longer under the schoolmaster, but as Christ has fulfilled the law in His own Person, so He gives us power to walk in Himself as the Way of Life, and thus the "righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." This is what the next Psalm develops.

PSALM 119.

THE WAY OF LIFE

CHRIST is the Temple, the Door of Righteousness, the Foundation Corner Stone. He is also the Way of Life. That Life is not a vague Life. It is the fulfilling of the law given in the wilderness. That "law was spiritual," though by the carnal bondage under which the Israelites were held, it failed to raise them to life. They needed a redemption in order to fulfil the law. To them in a state of death, the law was only "unto death." Now, however, as being redeemed in Christ, we are set free, not *from* the law, but *for* the law, so as by the grace of Christ the living Way, to find the law of the Covenant no longer a bondage, but a spiritual power wherein we may rejoice.

We come then now to the praise of the law, being "under the law to Christ" (1 Cor. ix. 21). "Happy are those who are perfect in the way, and walk in the law of the Lord." The law of the letter fulfilled by the ministry of the Incarnate Word is glorified by the power of the Spirit. Man was created for happiness in

conformity with God's will. That joy is to be obtained by the Cross. We learn "to take up our Cross and to follow Christ."

The children of the New Covenant are counted unto the Lord for a generation. They are the seed which shall serve Him (Ps. 22. 21). They have to walk through the wilderness of the world in the new and living way which Christ has provided. That is the way of union with Himself by the apprehension of faith, the grace of sacraments, the power of the Spirit, the conformity of outward life.

The alphabetical character of this Psalm signifies the law of the letter. The eightfold development signifies the power of the regenerating Spirit.

It may be noticed here that there is no complete Alphabet in the Psalter until Ps. 111., *i.e.* not until Messiah is called to be High Priest at the Right Hand of God. Not until the institution of the Mediatorial Kingdom was the fulfilling of the law possible to man.

In Ps. 118. Jesus is welcomed into the Temple with the Hosannas of childlike hearts.

Ps. 119. anticipates the Benediction which the heavenly choir shall sing: "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the City" (Rev. xxii. 14).

How should the constant repetition of this Psalm rouse us to diligence of effort, that we may so live in the grace of Christ as not to fail of that Benediction.

The twenty-two considerations of the living Way seem to be as follows:

- ⲁ 1 The necessity of perfect conformity to God's law.
- Ⲃ 2 The Incarnate Word, the sphere of purity, "in whom we are created anew unto all good works."
- Ⲋ 3 The gift of Divine Life by "the Spirit of revelation in Christ."

- Ⲅ 4 The discipline of the Cross.
- ⲅ 5 The righteousness of faith seeking the things above with holy love.
- Ⲉ 6 The feebleness of the earthly nature amidst the solace of God's covenant.
- Ⲉ 7 Rest in the Mediatorial Word amidst the night-season of our earthly pilgrimage.
- ⲏ 8 The covenant of New Birth wherein the Divine Nature is itself our portion.
- Ⲑ 9 The Divine goodness lifting up the penitent to participate in its likeness.
- ⲑ 10 The moral perfection ordained for man in his original creation.
- ⲓ 20 Life on earth a state of expectancy.
- ⲓ 30 Life in Christ assured in the Heavenly Kingdom.
- ⲓ 40 The probationary discipline of God's law.
- ⲓ 50 The law of liberty filling the weary heart with ecstasy.
- ⲓ 60 The hatefulness of worldly power from which we must flee to God for refuge.
- ⲓ 70 The security of grace amidst the assaults of worldly pride.
- ⲓ 80 The regenerate life feeding upon Divine Truth in sacramental mystery.
- ⲓ 90 The Divine righteousness manifested through the sharpness of earthly trials.
- ⲓ 100 Integrity of heart anticipating the brightness of the approaching day of eternity.
- ⲓ 200 The expectation of the faithful looking amidst their suffering to be vindicated by the truth of the Redeemer.
- ⲓ 300 The victory of faith looking forward to the promised salvation.
- ⲓ 400 The pleading of the Cross by which the lost sheep is brought home with shouts of joy.

The living Way reaches its completeness when we learn to bear the Cross. On the Cross Jesus seeks His straying sheep. By being crucified with Him we come back to the Gate of Heaven whence we have strayed. His loud cry upon the Cross rings on with Divine power

in the shout of praise and Eucharistic joy which His crucified people utter. Ps. 119. sets Christ before us as the way of grace, sheltering us and strengthening while we are here below, supplying the daily need of our souls.

PSALMS 120.-134.

THE GRADUAL PSALMS

NOW we have to consider the living Way wherein the Redeemer leads us, as a Way not only of earthly perfection but of spiritual elevation. We come to the fifteen steps of the Temple, the seven steps that lead to the outer court of the Temple, and the eight steps that lead within (Ezek. xl. 26, 34), the seven steps of *preventing* grace perfected in the Death of Christ, and the eight steps of *regenerating* grace operative through fellowship with His resurrection. Seven steps seem to belong mystically to David, and the eighth, which is the first of the inner stair, being ascribed to Solomon, belongs to the Son of David.

The whole series of Gradual Psalms, being a Quindecad, serves as a symbol of Christ.

We may well regard the first of these Psalms as Davidic, although it stands anonymous. To David also are inscribed the third and the fifth, like the notes in a musical scale. Solomon gives forth the Octave Psalm, the beginning of the new life in the City which God builds, and where He watches over His people, according to the promise of the outset in Ps. 120. This is the beginning of the new dispensation, the regenerate life. We seem to hear the voice of the Beloved, after a pause, taking up the Octave of the Dominant (Ps. 131.). David had sung with the uplifted voice of faith, deploring the bondage of earth (Ps. 120.), rejoicing in the earthly Jerusalem as a city of promise (Ps. 122.), resting in the

security of the Divine Covenant for protection (Ps. 124.). Now that Solomon has sung of the regenerate life, he pauses, as it were—perhaps because that new life has to pass through death, ere it can be realized in its fulness, for it is a buried life. The old Patriarch appears again singing the Octave of the Dominant (Ps. 131.). Who has crowned Him? God has become Incarnate in the depth of our sinful estate. So speaks Ps. 130. The Patriarch's grateful acknowledgement of the Incarnation follows in Ps. 131. How shall he praise God? Not by pride but in holiness. It is by charity that the city of God is built. Hear the beloved singing the praise of Love (Ps. 133.), the seventh note of the higher Octave, by which the strain, ascending from earth, passes on to rest in the full power of the heavenly choirs, so that the upper keynote swells out with a mighty voice of welcome, and all the multitude of the redeemed respond in glorious unison with this final utterance of the fifteenth. The blessedness of the pilgrim's ascent is perfected. Now at length resounds the blessing of the Lord in Zion. The Octave of Glory succeeds to the Octave of Regeneration. To climb the height of Heaven is to climb the height of praise. The Church with one voice takes up the glorious note to which David has led. They cry to the angels whose service knows no night, though we are pilgrims of darkness in this lower world—"Behold now, praise ye the Lord," and the angels make answer to each one as he steps forward to the final welcome,—“The Lord that made Heaven and earth give thee blessing out of Zion.”

The Gradual Psalms may be considered elsewhere as constituting a separate class. Now we consider them as leading us upward to the Trilogy of the Presence Chamber.

PSALM 135

JAH, THE LIVING GOD, REIGNING IN JERUSALEM

WE have noticed several Quindecads of the Psalter which seem to stand out by separate significance. Now we come to the close of the ninth series of Fifteens in simple, straightforward numeration. After the fifteen steps of the Songs of Ascent Ps. 135. seems to come as a resting-place. The ascent closed with an interchange of Benediction.

"Bless ye the Lord.
The Lord bless thee."

Now, standing triumphant by the power of JAH who has opened for us the way through the heavenly gates (Ps. 118.), we sing Halleluyah.

In this Psalm the name Jehovah occurs fifteen times, and JAH four times.

This Psalm seems to suppose the visible Presence of the glorified Manhood welcoming His redeemed upon the heavenly height. It is as if the Great King held out to us the golden sceptre. It is a brief commemoration of the typical victories and the wonders of Egypt, followed by a grateful Benediction of the Eternal Name and the perpetual memorial. The Lord is Himself the Life of Mount Zion, so that His people can bless Him. He is the Light, the lustrous Lamp, of the heavenly Jerusalem, so that His people behold Him abiding in the glory of God.

PSALM 136.

THE GREAT HALLEL

THIS Psalm opens the last Quindecad of the Psalter.

"Mercy evermore," is its continuous refrain of praise.

It is a Hodu, or Thanksgiving Psalm.

"Thank the Lord for He is good, for His mercy evermore! Thank the God of Heaven for His mercy evermore!" So does the goodness and mercy of God fill the soul's consciousness as we enter upon this last stage of adoration.

PSALM 137.

THE CRY FOR VENGEANCE

THE rapt soul rejoices in the glory of God, but the present joy gains its human consciousness by the remembrance of all the evil from which God has delivered His people. There must, therefore, be a retrospect of the misery of the past bondage. In truth the sufferings of the past were but the manifestation in God's suffering people of the hatred wherewith their persecutors rebelled against God. The judgement of the world therefore must accompany the welcome of the saints. The saints identified with God in His love as their joyous portion are identified with Him in His doom to be pronounced against the enemy.

The sufferings of the saints cry out, for in that day there is no need of vocal accusation. Each individual stands out, showing what he has borne and what he has suffered. The reward cannot be given to the saints without every detail of their suffering recoiling as it were from off them to rest upon the head of those who inflicted it. Sufferings are not endured on earth so as to be subsequently ignored when life is over. All remains. Every act must be rewarded if good. Every suffering must be avenged to the full. The persecutor receives back his own deeds for his own everlasting punishment. Our sufferings in this world are not mere abstractions. They are the work of Satan against the people of Christ, and on him every one of our pains must be avenged.

So the daughter of Babylon must experience desolation. They who wanted us to make our heaven upon earth, submitting to their bondage, find that the songs of Zion outlive their idle merriment.

Edom, too, must learn the worthlessness of his power. The bitter hatred of the profane heart which sought to put down the praise of God must receive retribution.

Babylon and Edom probably represent the world and the carnal Judaism which have ever been so bitter in their antagonism to the Christian Church.

The cry for vengeance therefore is not by reason of selfish hatred. It is the expression of a self-absorption of the redeemed people into the mystery of God's judgements. Those judgements operate in the nature of things, and not by personal impulse. We cannot love God and hold ourselves back from His judgements. We shall then see the wisdom and goodness of God in rewarding every man according to his deeds. All must receive in the body the things done in the body. The cry to remember implies not the vindictive appeal of one who has to inflict an arbitrary punishment, but the just return of past sin coming back by the unchangeable laws of the Divinely constituted universe upon the head of the offender.

Redemption and regenerating grace set free the faithful by supernatural mercy from the punishment which nature would have merited, but those who do not come to the Redeemer seeking His grace must bear the natural judgement to which they are exposed, "receiving in the body the things done in the body, whether they be good or bad" (2 Cor. v. 10).

This Psalm shall resound in the Song of the Saints in the Apocalypse: "Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are His judgements" (Rev. xix. 1).

An Octave of Davidic Psalms follows. We must remember that the praise of God, lifting us up in mystical contemplation, must not remove us from the care to live practically in the power of Christ's Redemption as we ought to do, now that we are the children of God.

PSALM 138.

REDEMPTION PERFECTED

DAVID worships, having his eyes open to behold the heavenly Temple. That Temple is the Body of Christ. So He praises God for magnifying His Holy Name by the admission of mankind to His Eternal glory.

He calls upon all heathen powers to hear him praise God, and he looks for all the nations and kings of the earth to accept with thankfulness the Gospel which shall be proclaimed to them.

He is confident that the work of God will be made complete.

PSALM 139.

THE GLORY OF THE REDEEMER'S ETERNAL PREDESTINATION

GOD searches him through and through, and knows his inmost being. The intensity of that knowledge appals him. There is no escaping from the scrutiny. No place evades. No darkness hides. God formed him in ways of wonder. His unformed powers were present to the Divine purpose. The days of earthly vicissitude were ordained of God. The Psalmist looks to rise from earth and find himself in God.

The wicked, on the contrary, must perish. Those that hate God must be the objects of hatred to the Psalmist. Otherwise he would not be true to his predestination.

So He seeks to be led in the way of eternal life.

PSALM 140.

APPEAL FOR DELIVERANCE

FALSEHOOD and violence are round about Him, the snares of Antichrist, but the Lord will protect His faithful servant in the midst of present poverty, and will call Him to live with Himself in glory.

PSALM 141.

THE REDEMPTIVE SACRIFICE

THIS is the great Evening Psalm of the Church as Ps. 63. is the Morning Psalm. The Sacrifice of Calvary is the Evening Sacrifice as the Holy Eucharist is the Morning Sacrifice. The lifting up of Christ's Hands with all the merits of His Passion is the incense.

The unjust judges by whom it is brought about shall be cast down.

PSALM 142.

THE DELIVERANCE OF THE FAITHFUL

MESSIAH owns God as His portion. He is being pursued by the enemy; but the prison-house of the grave cannot hold Him. He will escape thence, and will give the righteous a glorious crown in fellowship of His own Resurrection and victory.

PSALM 143.

THE FINAL PRAYER ERE THE SOUL OF JESUS
ENTERS HADES

THE enemy has pursued Him to the grave. His Spirit contemplates the darkness. He feels His desolation. His hands are stretched out upon the Cross. His soul is gasping in the absence of Divine consolations.

He cries to God that death may not have power over Him as it has over others.

This Sacrifice is the very will of God which He has come to do (Ps. 40.). Now He calls for the Spirit to lead Him, that He may offer Himself without spot to God. He will give up the ghost, and He knows that the Father will call Him onward to life. He will be delivered in righteousness, and all who oppose Him shall be rooted out.

We may notice how Pss. 139., 140., 142., 143. corresponds with Pss. 39., 40., 42., 43.

This is the last of the Penitential Psalms. It is the voice of the great Sin-Bearer, crushed down as He outwardly is by the power of the enemy. Having passed into the extremity of human weakness, He is preparing for the great cry by which He will destroy death by passing into the spiritual region of the dead. As Ps. 88. prepares for Ps. 89., so Ps. 143. prepares for the triumph of the seven Psalms which remain. In these He praises God for the triumph He has won, and calls upon all the universe to sing Halleluyah, attendant upon Himself as He takes His place upon the glorious throne of Divine holiness (Ps. 150. 1).

PSALM 144.

THE HAPPINESS OF THE SON OF MAN IN THE
SUBSTANTIAL FRUITION OF GOD

THIS Psalm is in some sort the final Psalm of the Psalter, for it is the first of the concluding Septuor which, all taken together, constitute one great song of praise and blessing.

Ps. 72. and Ps. 144. may thus be taken as closing the two halves of the Psalter with triumphant exultation,

Pss. 144. is based largely upon Ps. 8. and 18.: and so $144 = 8 \times 18$.

Messiah looks for deliverance from the "sons of the strangers." They are the seed of the serpent over whom He was to triumph as the Seed of the woman. He contemplates His own Human Nature in its natural weakness, and exclaims: "What is man that Thou takest knowledge of Him, or the Son of Man that Thou takest account of Him." Man is redeemed not by reason of any worthiness in his nature which could claim such redemption, but by the pure predestinating love of God, who has chosen the weakest object of creation for the manifestation of His glorious power by the Incarnation.

Man is vanity, a breath (verse 4), and talks of vanity, vileness, and falsehood (verse 12). His right hand is occupied about falsehood, for all the glory of this world is only deceit. It is contrasted with the Kingdom of Truth. "Every one that is of the Truth heareth Messiah's voice" (John xix. 37).

The generation of the faithful, the Seed of the Lord, shall have abundance in the glorious Temple of the Universe, which shall spring by Divine power out of the world of death. This is the true happiness of which the Psalter sings (Ps. 1. 1; Ps. 32. 1, 2; Ps. 41. 1; Ps. 112. 1; Ps. 119. 1, 2; Ps. 128. 1). Six Psalms of happy promise, two of them being double: the eightfold happiness of the regenerate,—moral perfection, accepted penitence, guileless faith, fear of the Lord, progress in the way of life, loving desire, heavenly fruitfulness. These stages of development which have been put forward are now glorified by the gift of eternal life in the expansion of the Church as the Communion of Saints and the inalienable fellowship of God, which is eternal life. The first blessing is for those who abstain from the world, the poor in spirit (Ps. 1. 1).

Then the penitent mourner (Ps. 32). Then the guileless, the meek (*ibid.*). These two are united together with the promise of Heaven and earth. Then those who wisely recognize by faith the hidden gifts of God hungering after righteousness (Ps. 41.). Then those who fear the Lord—merciful, loving, and righteous (Ps. 112.). Then those who progress in holiness, the perfection of a pure heart (Ps. 119.). Then those who keep His testimonies, seeking peace, and therefore peacemakers themselves (*ibid.*). These two are united together, for they who see God are His children who bear His likeness. Finally, they who are fruitful unto the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, those who are persecuted by the world (Ps. 128.). These answer to the Beatitudes in St Matthew.

These Psalms mark the progress of regenerate happiness, eightfold; in the midst of this evil world, sixfold. The blessings pronounced in the Psalter are twenty-six in number, and that is the number of Divine Life, the number of Jehovah.

The second Psalm ended with the blessing of those who would fly to Messiah for refuge (Ps. 2. 12). Ps. 84. ended with blessing those who trusted in the Lord of hosts (Ps. 84. 13). Solomon's Gradual Psalm spoke of the blessing of parentage in the heavenly Jerusalem, the heavenly fruitfulness which the succeeding Psalm developed in detail (Ps. 127. 5). The Psalm of vengeance for the redeemed ends with a twofold blessing for Him that comes to exercise God's judgements upon a sinful world (Ps. 137. 8, 9). Our present Psalm continues the contemplation of the same benediction of spiritual plenteousness, the Communion of Saints and the Life of God, a double final benediction (verse 15).

The happiness of the Redeemer consists in the happiness of His redeemed people. They are one with Him. They are His offspring. His joy is the

source of theirs, for it is their life. Their joy is the manifestation of His, for they are His living Body. So the reward of the Redeemer consists in having His own individuality multiplied by the Divine power in those who are His offspring. He sees of the travail of His soul and is satisfied (Isa. liii. 11), because the Father has given Him power to give eternal life to those whom the Father has given to Him as Disciples (John xvii.).

PSALM 145.

THE FINAL ALPHABET OF PRAISE

THIS Alphabetical Psalm is the last of those ascribed to David. It is called a Praise-Psalm, the only Psalm which has this title, although the whole Book is called the Book of Praise-Psalms. As the first Alphabetical Psalm was a Psalm of judgement (Ps. 9.), so this final alphabet is a Psalm of praise, the fifteenth alphabet of the Psalter. Messiah, the Incarnate God, calls upon all flesh to bless the Holy Name of God for ever and ever. This Psalm is accordingly followed by the five Halleluyah Psalms which close the Psalter.

The alphabet is complete except one letter, and that seems to exist, although somewhat hidden. The omitted letter is *y*, which, however, is the initial letter of the word "fallen" in the line which follows. It is the letter numerically significant of jubilee. Man may fall, and the legal perfection symbolized by an Alphabetical Psalm may fail, but "the Lord upholdeth them that fall," and this Divine life is that which the law could not claim.

This explanation taken from the Christian sense of the words is in fact identical with the explanation which the Rabbis gave, although they ground their interpreta-

tion not on any moral principle, but on one of those strange conceits which delight them.

Thus we come to the final Pentateuch of Praise. Each of these Psalms has a double Halleluyah.

PSALM 146.

NINEFOLD praise must be given to Jehovah. His acts are set forth in twelvefold power. They are consummated in the sovereignty of Messiah's Kingdom. "He shall reign for ever." Man's happiness is found herein. The final proclamation of blessedness is through the sustaining power of the Divine Covenant echoed on from the double benediction of Ps. 144. "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God."

PSALM 147.

FIVEFOLD praise to Jehovah. It is praise for the building of Jerusalem probably on occasion of the dedication of the wall by Nehemiah (Neh. xii. 27).

PSALM 148.

SEVENFOLD appeal to the heavens, and a collective appeal to all that is on earth to praise the Lord. In both cases the appeal is followed by a ratification, "Let them praise."

It is the regenerate Universe, perfected by the Sovereignty of Messiah, which is called to this eightfold praise.

PSALM 149.

THE saints are called to sing the New Song of the New Life. They reign with Christ in the glory of God. God is the joy of His people. They exult in His glory and execute His judgements with the two-edged sword of the Spirit.

PSALM 150.

AN appeal to praise God tenfold, summed in an exclamation of praise to Jehovah. The God-Man enthroned in holiness is the object of praise. The nine orders of the heavenly host tell forth that praise, and the whole universe filled with the sanctifying Spirit praises the Lord, the Covenant God of Israel.

Thus ends the Quindecad of Halleluyah Psalms, and the Psalter of the Beloved One lives on for ever in the triumphant Kingdom of the Son of David upon the throne of God.

ON CERTAIN CLASSES OF PSALMS

I

THE NUMBER FIFTEEN

FIFTEEN, which is the symbolical number of Christ in Holy Scripture, seems to be the dominant number in the arrangement of the Psalter.

Christ is symbolized by the fifteen steps of the Temple (Ezek. xl. 26, 31).

The number is represented in Hebrew by the Name of God, JAH. The sacredness of this Name makes the Jews resort to an artifice in order to avoid using the simple expression of that number in ordinary conversation.

The passage in Ezekiel seems to imply that the number Fifteen is best divided into seven and eight. Seven is the number of Grace, the steps whereby we come to Christ, and Eight is the number of renewal or regenerate life in Christ, whereby we abide with Him in the fellowship of God.

Fifteen may, however, be arranged in three Fives. Five is the number of legal righteousness, of the Pentateuch, and of Sacrifice. This would therefore make Fifteen signify Divine Righteousness, the fulfilling of the law by the Acceptable Sacrifice.

In the Psalter the number Fifteen comes into prominence in various ways.

264 CERTAIN CLASSES OF PSALMS

Fifteen Decads or Ten Quindecads make up the whole collection.

The closing Psalms of the Quindecads are remarkable.

- Ps. 15. The Divine Pattern. This is specially the Psalm of JAH, the portrait of Him that should ascend to the Mount of God.
- Ps. 30. The dedication of the House, *i.e.* of Christ's risen Body, which is the true Temple.
- Ps. 45. The nuptial song of Christ and His Church.
- Ps. 60. The Royal Banner set up. The great Psalm of victory over Edom, the strong city of the natural man.
- Ps. 75. "Destroy not." This Heading implies the Divine care of Jesus, and of His Church in the midst of an evil world.
- Ps. 90. This is the Psalm of Moses. Man is recognized as the child of the Eternal.
- Ps. 105. The Divine Sonship vindicated by the deliverance from Egypt.
- Ps. 120. This is the first of the fifteen Gradual Psalms.
- Ps. 135. This Psalm represents the faithful having ascended the fifteen steps, as standing now in the Presence Chamber of JAH, having entered into His rest.
- Ps. 150. The praise of JAH from all creation.

Notice next the various classes of Psalms.

Fifteen Alphabetical Psalms.

- Ps. 119. contains eight Alphabets. This eightfold Psalm with seven others makes fifteen Alphabets.

Fifteen Psalms for which a definite occasion is assigned by the heading.

- Pss. 3., 7., 18., 30., 34., 51., 52., 54., 56., 57., 59., 60., 63., 92., 142.

Fifteen Gradual Psalms.

Fifteen Halleluyah Psalms.

- These divide themselves into seven which have one Halleluyah. Pss. 104., 105., 111., 112., 115., 116., 117., and eight which have Halleluyah both at beginning and end, Pss. 106., 113., 135., 146., 147., 148., 149., 150.

THE ALPHABETICAL PSALMS 265

Thirty Psalms (two fifteens) are called "Shir."

In the Analysis it has been shown that there are apparently five subsections, each containing fifteen Psalms.

- Book I. Pss. 3.-17. Christ in Himself and in His Church.
Pss. 18.-32. Redemption perfecting the work of Creation.
- Book II. Pss. 51.-65. The Son of God, the Conqueror of death. These three Quindecads are marked by the special character of the titles prefixed to their initial Psalms.
- Book V. Pss. 120.-134. The Graduals.
Pss. 136.-150. The final Quindecad beginning with the great Hallel.

In Book I. the name "Elohim" occurs absolutely for "God" fifteen times. This is made the more remarkable by the fact that "Jehovah" occurs in Book II. (including the subscriptions) thirty-one times. Fifteen, the number of JAH, is thus the number of the recurrences of Elohim in the Jehovistic Book. Thirty-one, the number of El, is the number of the occurrences of Jehovah in the Elohist Book.

In Book III. Jehovah occurs forty-five times (three fifteens) including the subscription.

In Ps. 135. the word Jehovah occurs fifteen times, besides twice, when it is used as a vocative.

II

THE ALPHABETICAL PSALMS

THE fifteen Alphabetical Psalms are Pss. 9. (and 10.), 25., 34., 37., 111., 112., 119. (eightfold), 145.

In reviewing the arrangement of these Psalms we may notice first the Divine number, Nine. The Divine

work has been brought to its completeness by the coronation of the Son of Man as the Head of Creation in Ps. 8. But mankind were fallen into a moral chaos. God now comes to deliver His people, and to judge the world.

The purpose of the Alphabetical Psalmody seems to be order, organization, completeness.

The work of restoration in the Christian Church is, however, interrupted by Antichrist. This is signified by dropping the acrostic letter for several verses, although the proper number of verses is maintained. This symbolizes a time in which Divine order is withdrawn from the Church. Nevertheless, the Divine power of restoration asserts itself in the end. The closing verses of Ps. 10. have their proper acrostical letters. This Psalm is really the finishing portion of Ps. 9.

The number Fifteen now appears again. Fifteen Psalms bring us from Ps. 10. to the second Alphabet of the Psalter (Ps. 25.).

As there were fifteen steps leading up from the outer Court of the Temple, according to Jewish tradition (*vide* 2 Kings xx. 5, 8), so Fifteen Psalms conduct us from the Church militant (Ps. 10.) to the higher interior Court. In Ps. 25. we have presented to us the interior consciousness of union with Jesus, our great Intercessor, who has entered in through the everlasting doors to the heavenly height (Ps. 24.).

Once more the Divine number Nine. The third Alphabetical Psalm commences the closing Octave of Book I. In Ps. 34. David feigns madness at the gates of Gath. The foolishness of the Cross is the Wisdom of God. As Ps. 25. sets forth the intercession of Christ, so Ps. 34. sets forth His Crucifixion. "Not a bone shall be broken."

Three is the number of Resurrection. Ps. 37., after an interval of Three, is the Martyr Psalm. They who follow Christ bear the witness of the Cross by dying to the world. They have learnt the Alphabet of Heaven. Thirty-seven, the value of the name of Abel in Hebrew letters, gives a sort of measure of heavenly lore.

Just as in the Penitential Psalms we pass from the fourth, Ps. 51. to Ps. 102., which is twice fifty-one, so from the fourth Alphabetical Psalm which we have just considered, Ps. 37., we pass to Ps. 111., which is thrice thirty-seven.

The two Alphabetical Psalms, 111., 112., are constructed in the most absolute conformity with each other. The purpose seems to be to exhibit the conformity between Christ and His people.

These two Psalms introduce the Hallel. Jesus is seated at the Right Hand of God (Ps. 110.). His redeemed people are called out of Egypt. He gives them a law. The next Alphabetical Psalm is all in praise of the law, the law of the Spirit, the life of the Saints. This eightfold Alphabet of Ps. 119. is the seventh in the series of Alphabets.

One more step in advance. An interval of twenty-six Psalms. Twenty-six is in Hebrew the number of Jehovah. Ps. 145. is the last Alphabetical, and may be considered either as the eighth or the fifteenth, counting Ps. 119. as one or eight. Those two numbers both of them point to the renewal of man in Christ.

The first Alphabetical Psalm spoke of judgement. This closing one speaks of praise. It is the only Psalm which is specially called a Praise-Psalm.

The Divine character of all the intervals in the arrangement of the Alphabetical Psalms is very remarkable.

Nine : Of God, the Creator, coming as Judge (Pss. 9. 10.).

Fifteen : Of JAH ascended as Mediator (Ps. 25.).

Nine : Of the Son of God coming down to die (Ps. 34.).

Three : Of the martyr's life hidden with Christ in God (Ps. 37.).

These four represent the life of God's people in the world.

Three times the martyr's number may be regarded as initiating our life in Heaven, our Redemption from the Egypt of the world. $37 \times 3 = 111$. Ps. 111. shows the people of God as identified with their great High Priest of whom Ps. 110. had spoken.

The two Psalms which may be interpreted of the hypostatic union in Christ, or else of the conformity of the Christian to Christ, have no separation.

Seven : The number of the Holy Ghost brings us to the eightfold Alphabet of the Regenerate.

Twenty-six : The number of Jehovah leads us from the perfection of the obedience which the redeemed give to God upon earth by the power of the Holy Ghost, to the praise of God in Heaven, where they are called to sing the Halleluyah of eternal triumph.

The Psalter may be regarded as a circulating formula, so that we may take the five remaining Psalms, and add them to the Psalms at the beginning, which preceded the first Alphabet.

Here, again, we seem to have an interval of Fifteen, if the initial interval is reckoned as Ten, for the Alphabet beginning in Ps. 9. is finished in Ps. 10. Thus we have five Psalms (146.-150.), and ten Psalms (1.-10.), making the interval to be Fifteen altogether.

The Divine character of these numerical intervals is greatly enhanced by comparison with the intervals of the Penitential Psalms. It will be seen presently that they run upon a basis of Six and Thirteen, numbers specially indicative of worldliness and sin,

whereas the Alphabetical series, both in their subject-matter and in their intervals of arrangement, celebrate Divine judgement, organization, protection, and blessing.

It is not possible to state exactly what was the purpose of the acrostic arrangement of these Psalms, but we can scarcely believe that it was merely a literary freak. It does not seem to have fettered the minds of the writers. Indeed it has been noticed that some of the most beautiful thoughts in the Psalter are found in these Psalms, verses which live on for use in frequent and widespread forms of devotion.

In the present treatise it will occasionally be shown that the numerical value of the initial letter serves to supply a keynote for the interpretation of the verse. Where the letters succeed one another rapidly there is scarcely scope for the development of such an idea, *e.g.* Pss. 111.-112., but in longer Psalms, as Ps. 119., this key will often add a special power and spiritual phase to a verse which would otherwise seem to be little more than a moral truism. The eight verses of each section gain a unity of purpose, and illustrate one another when such a key serves to unlock their mysteries.

Such numerical considerations may often illustrate and develop a truth. They can never fetter the understanding. They can never import a meaning which the words do not contain, but they may help us to see what we should otherwise have left unnoticed.

III

THE PENITENTIAL PSALMS

THERE are seven Psalms commonly recognized as the Penitential Psalms (Pss. 6., 32., 38., 51., 102., 130., 143.).

Six and Thirteen are the numbers which in Holy Scripture commonly belong to the evil world. Six symbolizes worldly power and completeness, not as being necessarily evil, but generally connoting the idea of evil, for all completeness within the realm of nature must be evil. Nothing can be good which has not the sanctification of grace.

Thirteen implies rebellion, for Twelve represents the organic completeness of the Incarnation, the authoritative completeness of the Body of Christ, Eleven, therefore, as coming short of it, implies decay, and Thirteen implies corruption or excess.

Ps. 6. is the first Penitential Psalm.

It is noticeable, however, that Ps. 130. seems to be a second beginning.

Ps. 6., the Psalm of natural completeness, is the natural Psalm of the Sin-Bearer, for it needs the gift of grace which the Sin-Bearer, coming into our natural imperfection, brings along with Himself, so as to take our sin away. The descent into hell must take place before mankind can be recognized in the true purpose of His creation as the Son of God, which Ps. 8. has to announce, the Psalm of the new man.

Ps. 130. is the Psalm of the humiliation of the Incarnate God, coming to be our Sin-Bearer. It is one of the Psalms for Christmas Day. It is one of the

gradual Psalms, the eleventh step of that heavenly stair, having thus, in its numerical position, an intimation of decay. The Son of God takes upon Himself our nature, which was in a state of decay, and renews it with Divine Perfection. So, then, in Ps. 130. the second Adam appears. He speaks to His Father, bearing upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh. This Psalm looks like a fresh beginning.

Let us now consider the intervals between the seven Psalms.

From Ps. 6. to Ps. 32. there are twenty-six Psalms, two Thirteens of penitence. Twenty-six is also the number of Jehovah. The number Thirteen expresses the sin for which Jehovah comes to make atonement. It expresses both sin and atonement, for atonement must be equal to the sin for which it is offered.

The prophet says to Zion that "she has received of the Lord's Hand double for all her sins" (Isa. xi. 2). How so? The penitence of man sufficeth not to remove sin. Jerusalem must bear her own penalty, but that will not avail unless the Incarnate God, the Spotless One, bear it also for her. The "double" therefore implies the redemptive, atoning power of the suffering, the Elect Servant on whom her sins were to be laid.

Twenty-six Psalms therefore make the interval between the primary confession of sin in Ps. 6. and the blessedness of the atonement gratefully accepted in Ps. 32.

Again: Six Psalms.

Ps. 38. is the third Penitential Psalm, the complaint of the Sin-Bearer pleading His Passion for the cleansing of His people, who feed thereon with penitence.

Again: Thirteen Psalms.

Ps. 51. brings before us the Redeemer in the likeness of sinful flesh, renewing our nature and building

the heavenly Jerusalem by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Now: Fifty-one Psalms, *i.e.* three Thirteens and two Sixes.

Ps. 102. is called the prayer of the afflicted. It will be seen at once that this number is twice Fifty-one. Ps. 51. thus receives an emphasis from the numerical relationship to the next Psalm. Ps. 102. speaks like the Church echoing the penitential appeal of the God-Man in Ps. 51. This Psalm is like a closing Psalm of penitence.

Now: Twenty-eight Psalms.

Here we have a break in the arrangement based upon the numbers Six and Thirteen, which seem to regulate the Penitential Psalms.

This suggests our taking the next Psalm as the initial Psalm of the penitential series, and Ps. 102. as the closing one.

Ps. 130. is a special Psalm of Incarnation, like Ps. 51. What is the difference? Ps. 51. is like the Genealogy of the Synoptic Gospels. It dwells upon the fact of Messiah having been conceived in a sinful nature, although having in Himself the Truth and Wisdom which God desired to find in man. Ps. 130 is like the opening of St John's Gospel, the voice of the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Is there any significance in Twenty-eight, the number of the interval? It might well be that the Psalms of any class should be distributed upon a basis of appropriate intervals, and yet there might be a remnant of Psalms outside the series which had nothing in common with those intervals. It is the alien character of Twenty-eight which suggests considering Ps. 130. as the first Psalm of a series circulating through the remainder, and coming to a close at Ps. 102.

However, there may be a reason suggested for Twenty-eight.

Fourteen is the number of David in Hebrew. Two Fourteens may represent the Son of David, who is the Lord of Glory.

The Son of God becomes Incarnate. He speaks from the deep of our sinfulness. That could be no true Sonship to David which did not find its fulness in Christ. From David to Christ are twenty-eight generations in St Matthew's Gospel. Ps. 130. is the Psalm of Christ's Birth, born to save us from our sin as His children in the morning watch of the Resurrection. The number well expresses the Redeemer, for Ten tells of moral perfection, inherent in Him, and Thirteen tells of sinfulness assumed by Him. "He hath looked down from the height of His sanctuary" (Ps. 102. 19).

He is indeed Himself the afflicted One who spake in Ps. 102., and He is also Himself "the Lord God whose years are throughout all generations." The very word, "the afflicted," harmonizes with this interpretation, for in Hebrew "afflicted" is numerically One Hundred and Thirty.

We learn from Heb. i. 10 that the Divine Person addressed in Ps. 102. is God, the Son. He is the same yesterday and to-day and for ever (Heb. xiii. 8). It is the Human Soul of the afflicted Manhood which in this Psalm appeals to the Godhead of His Incarnate Person for the deliverance which it needs.

Ps. 130. expresses the rebelliousness of man by the number Thirteen. The first Adam was constituted in the likeness of God which he forfeited. The Second Adam assumed the likeness of sinful flesh in order to "redeem Israel from all their sins."

Again: Thirteen Psalms.

Ps. 143., the last Penitential Psalm, is doubly

expressive of sin, for $143 = 11 \times 13$. This number therefore symbolizes both decay and rebellion. From these in this Psalm the penitent pleads to be delivered.

This final desire of penitence prepares for the great Septuor of joyous fellowship and praise with which the Psalter ends. We must be "quickened in the righteousness of God's Name" in order to join that heavenly praise. This Penitential Psalm prepares for that final chant as in music the discord prepares to expect the final chord into which it is resolved.

This leaves seven Psalms at the end of the Psalter. Seven Psalms conduct the sin-burdened Struggler to the haven of rest in God's holiness.

Penitence, however, is to be a recurring principle for many as long as the years of earthly life shall last. The saintly life emerges in the Halleluyahs of eternity. But "Halleluyah cannot always be our song while here below." We have to undertake fresh courses of penitence.

So then we look to begin the Psalter again. Grace attained through penitence leads on to a renewal of penitence with deeper devotion. It is as it were in the strength of the seven closing Psalms that we return to take up Ps. 1. Thus our first stage of penitence will again be Ps. 6.

Seven Psalms at the end and six at the beginning! This makes an interval of Thirteen Psalms. If we consider the Psalter as a circulating formulary, just as we did in treating of the Alphabetical Psalms, we get the appropriate interval of Thirteen.

We have already seen a certain fitness in making Ps. 130. the first of the series and Ps. 102. the last. Now, then, we find that all the intervals between the seven Psalms run upon a basis of Six and Thirteen, which are numbers indicative of sin. The two numbers

are prominently marked in the initial Psalms of the series, whether we begin with Ps. 6. or Ps. 130.

If we begin with the Christmas Day Psalm, we gain in the developing instruction of the series, for it ends with the deeper lamentation for sin in Ps. 51. and the fuller consciousness of Divine Glory in Ps. 102.

This leaves the fragment of twenty-eight Psalms altogether outside of the series, so that it does not interfere with the intervals proper to the work of penitence.

It was noticed in the former article that the intervals of the Alphabetical Psalms are just analogous to these, but their number speaks of Divine power and life while these symbolize sin. The two series, therefore, corroborate the idea of a Divine overruling intention in their arrangement. Certainly it was no human artifice which distributed the Eight Alphabetical Psalms and the Seven Penitential Psalms with such appropriate numerations.

Book V. Two Penitential Psalms—

Ps. 130. The humiliation of the Son of God to earth.

Ps. 143. His preparation to descend into hell and assert His triumph.

Book I. Three Penitential Psalms—

Ps. 6. The Sin-Bearer, contemplating the grave in its silence.

Ps. 32. The blessedness of the gift of pardon.

Ps. 38. The pleading of the Passion.

Book II. One Penitential Psalm—

Ps. 51. The Incarnate Redeemer looking to build up Jerusalem.

Book III. No Penitential Psalm. It is the Book of Divine Sonship in the heavenly Kingdom.

Book IV. One Penitential Psalm—

Ps. 102. Our life in Christ a hidden life, sharing His afflictions and lifted up to His eternal glory.

IV

THE COMMINATORY PSALMS

THE Comminatory Psalms may be considered as beginning with Ps. 7. That is the Psalm of the Descent into hell, which naturally finds its expression under the number Seven, for the Seventh Day of the week is the day of our Lord's being in the grave.

The denunciation began indeed in Ps. 5., which is the Psalm of Sacrifice. It is the Psalm of the Eucharistic or Morning Sacrifice, pleading the Evening Sacrifice when the Righteous Servant had completed His day of earthly struggle and lay down in the sleep of death to claim His victory. "Their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue. Destroy thou them, O God; let them perish through their own imaginations; cast them out in the multitude of their ungodliness, for they have rebelled against Thee" (Ps. 5. 10, 11.). Thus we have the betrayal brought before us in union with the institution of the Eucharistic memorial by which "those who trust in God are to rejoice." The fifth Psalm points to that Thursday evening when Judas went out to accomplish what his flattering lips had planned for his Master's death.

In Ps. 7., however, the deed is seen to be completed. The call for retribution follows. It must be noticed that this call is not for vindictive retaliation. "He is fallen himself into the destruction that he made for others." It is his own act, which has proved harmless to Messiah, which must recoil therefore upon himself that did it. While the Psalmist pleads confidently the Divine love as His own security, He leaves the Evil One

to bear the natural consequences of his sin. The perpetuity of forces bringing evil is arrested for the faithful by the grace of Messiah's merits, but Christ does not plead His merits except for the faithful. The traitor must be left to suffer according to the course of nature.

This seems to be the law of denunciation in the Psalter. God is not invited to pursue the evil by introducing a new force of vengeance. It is the law of God's Providence ordering the course of nature which makes the traitor suffer for his crime.

In Ps. 9. the same law of natural retribution appears again. "In the same net which they had privily is their foot taken" (Ps. 9. 16).

In Ps. 10. it is continued. Antichrist in boastful pride repudiates God's moral government. God's appearance must show him that his sin remains treasured up against the day of wrath.

Ps. 16. proclaims that Messiah will not plead for those who reject the covenant of faith. He could not do so without rising up in definite opposition to God's righteous judgement. The Atonement is not intended to counteract God's justice and make the sinner escape, but it is to call forth an energy of Divine life, so that those who will come to Him may live in Divine love, and thus be raised out of the bondage of a sinful nature.

Ps. 17. again pleads that he may be cast down so as to learn the deceitfulness of the evil world on which he relied (verse 13).

Ps. 28. calls for God to break down the ungodly and not build them up, but it is because they "regard not the works of the Lord." It is the operation of God's constituted laws which must work upon them for destruction (verse 5).

In Ps. 35. the lying lips are to be put to silence.

Ps. 35. brings forward the direct antagonism of the Psalmist against the ungodly that are around. The Lord is called to fight for the Psalmist against them. He could not help making this appeal without absolutely giving up all resistance. Messiah looks for God's power to give protection rather than trust man's violence. Still, however, it is the law of natural retribution by which he dooms the foe, that "he may fall into his own mischief." So shall "destruction come upon him unawares," but it is the result of his own heedlessness not recognizing that God was pledged to defend His servant. The Psalmist does not seek for personal vengeance. He looks for God's protection, since it is in God's cause that he suffers. This is not vindictive bitterness but trustful faith. The Psalmist proceeds to speak of the unmerited violence of the attacks upon himself. When the present enemy was in distress he prayed and fasted on his behalf, but he, on the contrary, has sought to destroy the Psalmist. All the evil has originated with the antagonist, and must recoil upon him. Only so can the Psalmist be in safety. He does not seek His own triumph by the enemy's hurt, but asks for deliverance by the enemy experiencing what he has sought to do for the hurt of God's representative.

The bitterness of this Psalm does not consist in any malevolent retaliation which the Psalmist contemplates, but in the malevolence of the enemy which it recapitulates. That malevolence was not against the Psalmist but against God. It were disloyalty to God to wish that it might be unpunished. The Psalmist has shown himself willing to share with the enemy in penitential humiliation if the enemy will humble himself in penitence.

As the Psalmist is suffering from unjust reproach, God must be dishonoured unless He interferes to

vindicate His servant. If the enemy gives way to such scorn and escapes unscathed, God will be dishonoured.

As thirty-five is divisible by seven, Ps. 35. naturally points to our Lord's descent into hell, and the Psalmist looks to be vindicated against the Powers of Darkness by the resurrection. Those Powers of Darkness are the serpent and the seed of the serpent. They thought to devour Messiah, but could not do so.

They are the enemies of mankind, and mankind cannot be redeemed from their malice unless they are overthrown.

Ps. 36. shows how important for the support of man in true religion is the manifestation of God's judgement, bringing to nought the power of the world.

In Ps. 40. the ungodly rejoice over the Accepted Sacrifice for sins because they make outcry that He is suffering for sins. "They think Him to be smitten of God and afflicted" (Isa. liii. 4). They cannot see the righteousness of Messiah unless they experience the reality of their own wickedness in seeking to destroy Him. The Death and Passion, which are the redemption of the saints, must be equally the doom of the impenitent. Their suffering must be proportionate to their own sin.

Ps. 41. speaks of the King being raised up so as to be able to requite His disloyal subjects. The punishment of iniquity must be dear to the heart of a true and righteous King. It is not personal vindictiveness but the well-being of His Kingdom which requires it.

In Book II. Ps. 44. speaks of the suffering state of God's people under the oppression of the enemy. Ps. 49., on the contrary, speaks of the absence of any hope for the ungodly to carry their worldly prosperity along with them into another world.

Ps. 52. describes the boastful violence of the wicked seeking to destroy the just, and the eventual triumph of the righteous.

Ps. 54. appeals for the destruction of the ungodly tyrants who rise up and have not set God before their eyes.

In Ps. 55. their malicious speech and strife involves the Psalmist's prayer that God will "destroy their tongues." The bitterness of David's sufferings is enhanced by the tenderness with which he has borne their plottings, not exerting his kingly power to repress them as he ought to have done. They have grown powerful. He prays that they, like Korah's company of old, may go down alive into the pit. It is the suddenness of the overthrow which is specified, and the futility of forbearance has been manifested.

In Ps. 57. the trilogy "Destroy not" describes them as digging a pit and falling into the midst of it themselves.

Ps. 58. describes the seed of the serpent. They shall be rooted out and the righteous shall rejoice thereat.

Ps. 59. alleges that hard strife by which Messiah's death and resurrection were prefigured. He prays that His enemies may be scattered, and that they may be consumed. Yet the end is not that they should perish in misery, but that by ceasing to be a people they, in their antitype, the Jews, may come to know the true God as being the only God ruling in all the world.

Ps. 62.—God rewardeth every man according to his work (verse 12).

Ps. 63.—They that seek the hurt of His soul shall go under the earth, and be a portion for foxes.

In Ps. 64. the violence of their attacks upon the Psalmist is again detailed, and God will suddenly smite

them, but it is their own tongues which shall make them fall (verse 9).

Ps. 68. is the march of triumph. God will wound the hairy scalp of him that goeth on still in his wickedness. The tongue of His dogs shall be red with their blood.

This brings us to Ps. 69., the second of the three great Comminatory Psalms.

In this Psalm one thing is very noticeable. The Psalmist details the depth of His own woe, His reproof, His shame and His dishonour. He looked for some to comfort Him and found none. On the contrary, "they gave Him gall to eat, and when He was thirsty they gave Him vinegar to drink." This was the turning point. Now He breaks forth in imprecation.

This is exactly true to the Gospel narrative, for the incident of the vinegar was the final detail of Messiah's Passion. Jesus knew that all things were now finished, and that the Scripture might be fulfilled, He saith, "I thirst." When He took the vinegar, He said, "It is finished." What is thus noticed as the culminating incident of the Passion is also the culminating detail, the turning point, of this Psalm.

Up to this point He was interceding for the Jews. Now it is manifest that intercession avails not to soften them. He must therefore utter the imprecations of judgement. The rejected Saviour becomes the Divine Judge.

The imprecations are an act of judgement against them for their want of sympathy to a fellow-man in the extremity of His weakness. For them He has wept, fasted, prayed. Now they cut themselves off from all consideration. Messiah has His Father's commission to fulfil.

Verse 23.—(i.) Their table is to be made a snare to them. (ii.) Their Paschal Feast will be their excom-

munication. The sin of sacrilege. It is to be a trap when they are secure. Thus shall their own act recoil upon them. They gave Him food in malice: their food shall be their destruction. They felt themselves secure in God's covenant and did not heed His warning. Such presumptuous sin was against the Holy Ghost!

Verse 24.—(iii.) They feasted their eyes on His misery, and their eyes shall be blinded so as not to see His Divine glory. Spiritual blindness.

(iv.) They have used all their strength to maltreat Him. Now God will make them feel their weakness. Christ came to bear their burden. They must bear it now and sink under it.

Verse 25.—(v.) God is to pour on them His indignation.

(vi.) His hot anger is to fall on them. Jerusalem is to be wiped out of existence, as in the judgement (Ps. 9. 7).

Verse 26.—(vii.) Let their habitation be desolate, which they sought to secure by putting Christ to death.

(viii.) No man to dwell therein. This is expressly quoted in Acts i. 20. This is the punishment of their blasphemous objurgation when they cried against Him who was innocently bearing all the suffering of man's sinful inheritance.

Verse 28.—(ix.) So their sins are to be multiplied.

(x.) Their participation of God's redeeming righteousness is precluded. The mercy is the measure of the guilt.

Verse 29.—(xi.) So they are to be blotted out of the Book of Life. (xii.) The predestination of blessing which belonged to them in God's covenant is forfeited.

They are not to be admitted into the righteousness of the New Covenant which is obtained by the Cross and Passion of Him over whose sorrow they exulted.

As their national Blessing was twelvefold, so the

curse is twelvefold in its form. It is all manifestly outside of any personal vindictiveness on the part of the writer. It rises up to dimensions which suit nothing but the relationship between God and the people of His covenant, whom He has to cut off because they reject Him in whom their covenant, "their habitation and the perpetuity of their privileges," has its warrant.

It is not the action of arbitrary malice which is contemplated, but the judicial assignment to their sin of such retribution as is akin to it in character.

It expresses the natural outcome of sin when Messiah's redemptive interposition is withdrawn. And God has not rejected His people; it is they who have rejected Him.

Religious formality, spiritual presumption, spiritual blindness, despair—such is their fault.

God's indignation, His hot anger—these must rest upon them.

The overthrow of their city and spiritual organization, the loss of a High Priesthood to perpetuate their existence, growth in sin, alienation from the promised righteousness of legal expectation, excommunication for ever from the promises which the Jewish covenants contained, casting away from the righteousness of the New Covenant—such is the summary of this great Comminatory Psalm, too exact in its detail to admit of application save to the carnal Israel on rejecting Christ, too terribly true in its results to permit of any cavilling objection, for it bears the impress of its Divine origin, and not to recognize it as Divine is to subject ourselves to its curse.

Ps. 70. identifies the Sufferer of Ps. 69. with the Accepted Sacrifice of Ps. 40., for it resumes the cry for vengeance which that earlier Psalm contained.

In Ps. 71. David prays that all may be confounded

and perish that sin against his soul. Unless they are ashamed, the Kingdom of Peace wherein Messiah shall be glorified (Ps. 72.) could never come.

We advance to Book III.

The introductory Psalm contrasts the perishing condition of the ungodly with the Divine love wherein the faithful abide, but there is no expression of prayer against them. The judgement of God is avowed with reverence.

Ps. 74. resumes the lament over the miserable condition of the covenanted people which Ps. 44. had uttered. It calls for God to "pluck His Right Hand out of His bosom and consume the enemy." "The presumption of them that hate Him increased ever more and more."

Ps. 75. warns the ungodly that they must drink the dregs of the cup of wrath. Divine life exalts the righteous.

Ps. 79., like Ps. 74., laments over the ruinous state of the Temple and the people, and calls for "the vengeance of the bloodshed to be showed upon the heathen," and their "blasphemies to be rewarded sevenfold into their bosom." The sevenfold Spirit vindicates the faithful.

Ps. 83. surveys the gathered tribes that sought to destroy Israel, and prays that they may be as stubble before the wind, that they may be put to shame and perish. The result, however, of their being consumed (as with the Jews in Ps. 59.), is that they are brought to a knowledge of Jehovah as the true God of all the earth.

Indeed the ungodly are ashamed by the reward which God gives to the righteous, for "Thou, Lord, hast holpen me and comforted me" (Ps. 86.).

Ps. 87. rejoices that nations once hostile are gathered into the covenant of the heavenly Zion.

In Book IV. Ps. 92. exults, for "mine ear shall hear his desire of the wicked that rise up against me."

Ps. 94. sees the heritage of the Lord smitten down, echoing somewhat the lamentation of Pss. 44. and 74. and 79. The wicked condemn the innocent blood, but God will recompense them their wickedness and destroy them in their own malice. "The Lord our God will destroy them." The judgement upon those who assail Christ lasts on into the times of the Christian Covenant which this book portrays.

We now come to Book V.

Ps. 108. is a song of victory gathered up from Pss. 57., 60. The victory is the Lord's.

Ps. 109. is the great Psalm of imprecation. This, therefore, we must consider in detail.

As Ps. 35. follows Ps. 34., the Angel of the Lord coming forth in vengeance as he came forth previously to defend, so Ps. 69. follows Ps. 68. The Pentecostal March of the Church leads on to a display of the judicial power of the Passion. So also now Ps. 108. celebrates Messiah's triumph over tribes that had cherished unceasing hatred, and thus in Ps. 109. the wrath of the Lamb has to be exerted against those who will not have Him to rule over them. It is the Psalm of judgement preparing for the manifestation of Messiah in all the glory of His Mediatorial Kingdom, seated on the Right Hand of God, as High Priest ruling His Church.

First of all, however, it must be remembered that this is the Psalm of One who had much love for those who are now His enemies. He gave Himself to prayer in the fulness of redeeming love. We seem to hear the opening verses of the Psalm anticipating the cry, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" (verse 4).

But the enemy only return hatred for His good-will.

The Word of God is called to come forth against them because they have spoken against the Psalmist with words of falsehood and hatred; also, the Psalmist can be

none other than the Incarnate Word. He has hidden His glory in the condescension of tender love. Now it is time for Him to speak with the authority of judgement.

Verse 6.—Man has repudiated the Sovereignty of the Divine King. Hence must he be delivered to the power of a wicked ruler, the Prince of this World. Jerusalem was to be given over to Rome to be laid waste because she rejected her true King.

Satan is to stand at his right hand to accuse him.

We have here a counterpart of the vision of Zech. iii. 1. The prophet saw Joshua, the High Priest, standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan accusing him.

Here we have an evil power sitting in judgement as the Angel of Vengeance, for God sees the power of evil in this evil world. Satan is accusing the criminal.

In the former case the Angel of the Covenant claimed the High Priest out of the power which Satan exerts in the world, and when Satan calls upon his own agent to pass condemnation, the Lord, speaking by the Covenant Angel, rebukes him.

Now Satan is within his rights. The ungodly man has rejected the Divine covenant of redeeming love. He is therefore left for Satan to accuse and to destroy, according to the law of his sovereignty as the Prince of this World. The Jews in rejecting Jesus, the Covenanted King of the Jews, fell away from the protective government of the Angel of the Covenant, and were left to Satan.

Verse 7.—When he is judged he is to go forth guilty. Christ came to bear the sin of mankind and to cleanse those who would seek His covenant. If the cleansing of Christ is refused, there is no other power to cleanse.

Christ did not come that sin might be pardoned but that it might be cleansed, and He cannot "pray for the

world" continuing in sin which does not seek the cleansing (John xvii. 9).

His prayer is to be accounted sin. The offices of the Temple were instituted in order to bring men near to God, for they all spoke of Christ. The Jews, rejecting Christ both as King and as Redeemer, only found their Temple services aggravate their sinful condition. The law which was ordained unto life, they found to be unto death (Rom. vii. 10).

Verse 8.—Let his days be few. It is indeed better that a life should be cut short which can only be prolonged for increase of crime. The speedy suicide of Judas and the destruction of Jerusalem after forty years of trial show the fulfilment of these words.

"His office let another take" finds its immediate execution in the election of St Matthias to the Apostolate, and its wider significance in the calling forth of the Gentile Church to take the place of the Jewish Covenant.

Verse 9.—It follows that his children must be orphans and his wife a widow if he is to die. But the words have more than a personal meaning.

The children of the Jews are indeed to be orphans, although, as St Paul says, "Theirs are the fathers" (Rom. xi. 5). They can no longer claim the inheritance of Abraham.

And what is the wife of the guilty one but "widowed Zion"? Now is fulfilled the word of Jeremiah. "How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! How is she become a widow" (Lam. i. 1). She knew not that her Maker was her true Husband. Doubly widowed! By her sin she has separated herself from her true Husband. Now in judgement the false spouse of the flesh, to whom she united herself by her carnal religionism, has died.

Thus is fulfilled the word of Hosea. During all these

ages Judah was "no longer to play the harlot, nor to be for another man, but was to be widowed, without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice" (Hos. iii. 4).

Verse 10.—His children were "to wander abroad and beg." The wandering curse of Cain (Gen. iv. 12) was to be fulfilled in the wandering nation that slew their brother. They were to wander to and fro for food. The howling dogs of the city are the type of them (Ps. 59. 11, 15).

"Let them seek it far from their ruined homes." In every part of the world the Jew was to be intent upon money-making. There was but one exception. He was to be found everywhere except in Jerusalem. How was this fulfilled through many ages. The return of the Jews to Jerusalem is the great sign that the end of all things is near. It does not violate the curse of eighteen centuries' duration. Thank God, it shows that that curse is now all but accomplished. "Now shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord, their God, and David, their King" (Hos. iii. 5).

Verse 11.—"Let the extortioner consume all that he hath, and let the stranger spoil his labour." How has this been fulfilled, even down to the last persecutions by Russia!

Verse 12.—"None to have mercy on him or show grace to his fatherless children." How, alas! by man's wickedness have the Jews been cut off from all social sympathy!

But the orphans are those who have no longer any inheritance from Abraham as their father. This, then, is the primary meaning of this verse. There is no Mediator to bring to them mercy and grace from God, for they have rejected Him in whom alone it can be found.

Verse 13.—"Their residue is to be cut off, and in the next generation their name clean put out." The Jews deported into foreign slavery, so that even buyers were wanting! After one generation of forty years, Jerusalem destroyed! Its very name blotted out, Jerusalem no longer! Ælia, the city of Hadrian, taking its place.

Verse 14.—"The wickedness of his father is to be had in remembrance before the Lord, and the sin of his mother is not to be done away."

Such is the law of Divine government, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, not in unjust vindictiveness, but by reason of the unity of the family life. Sin must remain accumulating from generation to generation until the posterity show penitence. When they die to their fathers' sin, they die to their fathers' curse.

So did our Lord say, "Upon you shall come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, whom ye slew between the Temple and the altar. Verily, I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation" (Matt. xxiii. 35, 36).

Thus does our Lord seem to set His seal to the denunciations of this Psalm. Their memory is to be cut off from the earth because they had no pity. When Pilate presented Jesus to them in the extremity of His weakness, they had no pity in their hearts. Therefore they could receive none. When they saw the Man of Sorrows, they sought only to slay Him. Their punishment is the return of their own conduct upon themselves.

Verse 18.—"They delighted in cursing." Their very religion was to curse the Gentiles. Now shall the curse enter into their nation as the water of jealousy which the unfaithful bride was to drink, making the belly to swell

and the thigh to rot (Num. v. 27). As they would not have the Messianic blessing to be the strength of their national organization, the curse shall enter as oil into their bones.

Verse 19.—This shall "be as the garment that they wear." Whithersoever they go, they have to wear the blood-stained robe of their Brother whom they have slain. They have invoked His blood upon themselves, and when God beholds them in their persistent unbelief, He seems to take up the words of the Patriarch, "It is My Son's coat!" The blood of Jesus seen upon the impenitent cries for judgement, as the blood of Jesus resting upon the faithful is the sure warrant of acceptance and mercy.

So does this comminatory Psalm stand out as the terrible prophecy against Israel. Christ accepted it, when He was just entering upon His Passion. God has accomplished it during the lapse of ages with unfailing faithfulness. We cannot attempt to minimize it without setting ourselves to resist the Holy Ghost.

Let us not suppose that we have a purer, heavenlier love than the Psalmist through whom the Spirit of love gave in this Psalm the words of warning. He did not speak these words of solemn prophecy in the spiteful indulgence of natural vindictiveness. He spoke as being moved by the Holy Ghost, words of Divine scope in which the littleness of his own accidental surroundings swelled out into the mighty reverberations of heavenly majesty.

What if present circumstances suggested some of the teachings! Those things were to the ultimate realities only as the marks of measure upon a mathematical instrument by which the observer takes account of the vast objects and relationships of the infinite space above. The Psalmist is taken out of himself while he

contemplates what are the destinies of his Son, his Lord, who is the Judge of all the earth, and is called to sit at God's Right Hand in Heaven.

Ps. 137. remains in which we have the cry of the faithful for vengeance upon Babylon and Edom. We cannot consider this to be at variance with true Christian Spirit, for indeed it only anticipates the cry of the souls under the altar, as declared in the Apocalypse (Rev. vi. 10). If we shrink from such considerations it probably is not because our love is purer, but because our hearts are more identified with the carnal world. We may be quite sure that when the vengeance of God bursts out against the ungodly no natural good will be involved in the penalty which shall fall upon what is evil. In the just judgement of God all shall receive according to their deeds, whether they be good or bad. It were no sign of greater charity, but it would be disloyalty to God, and that is the very contradiction of all charity, to wish that any evil should escape its penalty. We must come to Christ and bring others to Him while it is time, but the sin which is not done away by the virtue of His renewing blood must remain to bear its penalty according to the law of nature. Not to identify ourselves with God in His judgement is to refuse to share His mercy.

Every Psalm of triumph involves a Psalm of vengeance, and *vice versâ*. So the great Hallel is followed by the cry of the Babylonian exiles. These two Psalms represent the two sides of Christ's appearing at the last day, glorified in His saints and exerting vengeance upon the ungodly.

So in Ps. 139. we have the expression, "I hate them right sore, even as though they were mine enemies" He who hates not evil cannot love good. It is but a dull, colourless twilight of indifference in which many are

content to live. Men do not know evil, and therefore do not hate it, because they do not know God, and therefore do not love Him. The one knowledge and the one love can only be proportionate to the other. In this world of evil we can only know good and evil as contraries. Hereafter, the faithful shall attain to know goodness in itself the glory of God's eternal love. Not until we behold His judgement accomplished on the evil, can we know His glorious love in the fulness of its truth. Therefore are the saints so eager in looking forward to the Divine Judgement.

Ps. 140. continues with the prayer that the "mischief of their own lips may fall upon the head of the ungodly : yea, that they may be cast into the fire and into the pit and never rise up again."

As the Psalter draws to its close it must look forward to the consummation of Divine judgement. Our Lord Himself tells us of the inevitable sentence, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. xxv. 41). He who will speak the sentence is the same who speaks by David in the Psalter.

The prayer "Thy Kingdom come" involves the slaying of all who would not have Him to reign over them" (Luke xix. 27).

We may close this review of the Psalter with the words which point onward to this coming.

Ps. 143. 11, 12.—"Quicken me, O Lord, for Thy Name's sake, and of Thy goodness slay mine enemies, and destroy all them that vex my soul, for I am Thy servant."

We have now briefly reviewed not only the Psalms which are commonly set apart as comminatory, but also all the scattered phrases of a kindred character which are found in other Psalms. They ought not to be separated from one another. We have to notice the

habitual tendency towards such expressions showing itself often alongside of the tenderest love. It is a sad injury to God's Word when men pretend to take a higher standpoint of Christian charity than is embodied in the Psalter. Rather we should try and see the law under which such imprecations were uttered.

It is plain that on many occasions they do so entirely surpass the bounds of any merely natural ill-will as to make us ready to recognize them as free from all ill-will upon other occasions. They plainly point to Divine mysteries.

They are also plainly appeals of faith, by which the Psalmist leaves himself in the hands of God, refusing to take any steps so as to seek to work out vengeance for himself.

On the contrary, they are often associated with acts of beneficence towards the very persons at whom they are uttered.

They do not even call for external infliction of evil, but they call for the ungodly to be left to experience the consequences of their own conduct. Whatever evil is to happen to them, is but their own doing. The moral judgement of God in the world is but an expression of the great law of the continuity of forces. Evil cannot cease to bring its consequences. Unless grace is given, raising the penitent to a higher communion with God, the law of nature requires that the force of evil shall go on operating for evil upon the guilty.

Punishment is always therefore regarded as being akin in kind to the transgression for which it is due and out of which it is generated.

As these Psalms are spoken by the Redeemer who died for our sins, they show that in His appeal for natural vengeance to have its course He is only withdrawing the benefit of His mediation from those who by

persistence in evil have to be left to the evil of their natural condition.

When the Psalmist pleads for the faithful and then bursts out in denunciation of the ungodly, he is only transacting beforehand the exclusive intercession by which our Lord, who died for all, could yet reject the world. There was no limit to His Love. There was a moral limit to His power in the finite sphere of action. The finite world refusing the infinite good must perish, as rejecting the Infinite Substance of Eternal Life.

We have to remember that the son against whom many of these imprecations are uttered was the favourite son of David. Absalom was naturally his father's best-beloved. Solomon, for whom David marked out the Kingdom, was assigned to that glory by Divine prophecy, not by his father's will. David's fault was that he was too indulgent to Absalom even after all of his rebellion, not that he was unduly harsh towards him. We must therefore interpret David's words by his conduct, and it will be manifest that David, in speaking words of prophetic anger against Absalom, had to put a great strain upon his own natural affections in so doing.

David's natural affection for Absalom symbolized what the prophets delight to speak of as God's special love to Israel. The Psalms point to the mystery of Israel's natural vocation and Israel's rejection in consequence of unfaithfulness and unbelief in Christ.

Thus the comminatory Psalms swell out into marvellous details of prophetic judgement against the Jewish nation which have received such literal fulfilment during eighteen centuries as to show the absolutely Divine character of the utterance.

These Psalms are of great importance for us to use, because they are not merely arbitrary condemnations, but they serve to exhibit the law that evil must produce

evil. *Malum culpæ* is a force which must eventuate in *malum pænæ*. We learn therefore to apply them as warnings to our own selves. We cannot escape the consequences of our sins. We must come to redeeming love to seek for grace that we may be created anew so as to live to the glory of God.

Such seems to be the primary consideration of those expressions of denunciation which we find in the Psalter. They were definite upliftings of the Psalmist's mind into fellowship with the Divine will which inspired him. But we should consider them as the utterances of David's mind, and we ought therefore to consider whether they imply some faulty habit of passion which God used or overruled. Doubtless, God does overrule evil actions for the accomplishment of His purposes. Can we conceive that He inspires a malicious temperament so that by its own gratification it becomes the mouth-piece of spiritual teaching?

We speak of David for simplicity's sake, but for our present purpose it does not matter who may have been the author of any particular Psalms. The character of David may indeed let in a light upon some expressions when we know the intensity of his feeling and the persistence of his conduct. But the relation of the mind to the inspiring power is the same, whether it be David or any one else.

Consider them first as written by David, and secondly as given to be used by ourselves.

As to the inspiration of their author, we must remember that inspiration did not set aside the natural powers of those whom God chose to be His mouth-pieces. Not in any way; not intellectually nor verbally nor morally. God might utter through their imperfect conception truths to which their natural conceptions could not reach. He not only enabled them

to speak things which they did not know, but while they uttered these things He did not give them understanding so that they could grasp their proper meaning. Such inspiration lingered on even in the Christian Church. Believers spake with tongues, and in the Spirit they spoke mysteries which needed the inspiration of another person in order to be interpreted. Thus we are expressly told that the ancient prophets also knew by revelation that "not unto themselves but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported by them that have preached the Gospel in the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven" (1 Pet. i. 12). The Holy Ghost spake by them with a heavenly control, but He was not sent down to them from Heaven as a vital power of spiritual transformation, as He is now sent down to dwell in the Church of God, the Body of Christ. He originated Divine conceptions within their minds, but He left them free to utter them according to their own habit of speech. He spake by them, but in their own words.

Not that the inspiration was less literal because it was not compulsory. Utterances which He inspired were not utterances of a living voice in a lifeless instrument. A song may be sung in perfect tune, and true to the composer's notation, and yet it may vary very much according to the pitch and the character, the strength, the sweetness, of the singer.

So did the mysterious gift of prophecy control, although it did not supersede, the natural characteristics of speech belonging to the speaker.

So with reference to moral characteristics, inspiration did not change their moral character or disposition. They were not regenerated by His inspiration as Christians are by their admission to the Body of Christ. They were not preserved from sin because

they were chosen to be prophets. They did not die to their sinful selves even in the very act of prophesying. Death unto self is the condition of receiving life unto God, but it goes beyond the morality of the natural man.

Indeed even with Christians the sinfulness of our natural habits mars in the very greatest of saints the action of the regenerating Spirit.—How prayers fail through our sinfulness, even though we are praying in the Holy Ghost! The Holy Ghost trains us in the exercises of the regenerate life. So also the Holy Ghost used the prophets for the purpose for which He needed them. In our case the purpose is primarily within ourselves, that we may be sanctified. In the case of the prophets the purpose was external to themselves. Their being true to the Divine Inspiration could not give them a living sanctity. They were "holy prophets," having an official sanctity, but they were not lifted up out of the sinfulness of nature by any communication of higher life. Such elevation as we receive could not be given until Christ was glorified.

We are not then to wonder if the prophets are found uttering feelings which savour of the natural heart and its desire for vengeance. Their words and their acts as recorded in Holy Scripture are used by Almighty God for His own purposes. They are not changed as to their own moral qualities. The sins of God's people recorded in Holy Scripture were not committed by Divine control, so that God might use them as types, but they were externally controlled by God, so that although sinful as natural acts, they should also be symbolical of Divine mysteries. The course of a sailing vessel is guided by the helm, but if the faulty disposition of the sails cause it to capsize that is not due to the steerage. God did not communicate the desire

of vengeance, although He implanted in man a principle of holy indignation. This, within the limitations of true goodness, was His original gift. Even amidst the perversion of carnal corruption, He could overrule it for the expression of a true and holy severity which was inseparable from His own righteous government of the world. The Psalter warns us at the outset, "Be ye angry and sin not."

We must not think of the prophet, who was still "a man of unclean lips and belonging to a people of unclean lips," as if he were an imperfect Christian. He did not receive the Spirit by the ordinances of the law as we receive it by the ministrations of the Church. We, as Christians, are raised to a life of higher character than the prophets, but they, with their inferior capacities, were reaching out by the stupendous energy of faith to such a responsive fellowship with God as puts the Christian Church of the last fifteen centuries utterly to shame.

This earnestness of faith, seeking to live for God, is what made David to be "the man after God's own heart," although David's heart had many a carnal desire which was at variance with God's law of purity. He strove to realize the supernatural, knowing the supernatural to be the only true, the only real, the only substantial, the only eternal. He was a man of faith working by love, although he was bound down by the flesh, for his spiritual understanding was not yet illuminated by the indwelling of the Sanctifier.

Indeed, when people complain of the spirit of vindictiveness which these Psalms are supposed to imply, they ought to consider whether their own words and actions are more true to Christian charity than the spirit when they so easily condemn.

Do they wish their enemy to triumph rather than themselves? They ought to do so if their words have

any true meaning, for the detailed contemplation of our enemy's suffering is not different in kind from the general wish that he should be punished. It is an idle thing to say, I do not wish my enemy any harm, when I am trying to do him harm! Yet with David it was just otherwise. He sought to do his enemy good. He watched over him and sought his deliverance. He bewailed and avenged his death. The harm which his Psalms invoke against the enemy, however tremendous in extent and detail, is not the gratification of triumphant pride, but the triumph of a Divine cause with which he knows himself to be associated, and is to spread forth in consequences altogether beyond his own anticipation and to be accomplished in years when he himself shall have passed away from earth.

There may be an altruism in the present day which is very unreasonable, but when it is put to the test it must be equally unpractical. Christian love is very different. It looks up to the glory of God as the supreme object of desire. We know that it is our duty as David did, to seek to help our enemy in what ways we can. We can accept our enemy's triumph equally with our own, because both of them are subordinated to God's will, and that is the true desire of all real charity. David could suffer as a type of Christ. Christ suffered for the glory of God to raise man up to God. Christian charity requires in us the exercise of that readiness to suffer which shall enable us to abide in the Divine life which Christ has given, being ourselves in Him dead to the world. Christian charity demands a forgetfulness of self which David practised much more than we do. He might pray for vengeance under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. We have to pray for vengeance on the world when we pray "Thy Kingdom come." David understood but imperfectly what his

words meant. We do not understand our own words much better, even if so well. As we look forward to the coming day of vengeance by the manifestation of Christ's Kingdom, do we reflect how much we might do, by prayer, by fasting, by alms, by personal sacrifice, by diligent labour among the ignorant, by going forth for the evangelization of the heathen, to rescue mankind from the vengeance of Almighty God which is coming upon them? None will complain of David in the last day because he prayed for vengeance. Many, alas, will then complain of us Christians because they have been left to eternal vengeance through our self-indulgent idleness.

The law of love has to be learnt in the school of Christ. We ought rather to blame ourselves for the miserable decay of active self-sacrificing love than to judge the Psalmist for not having learnt a conventional softness of sentiment and phrase which had not then been inculcated. Civilization in modern times has learnt to admire the Spirit of kindness because Christ has enjoined upon us the law of love. Natural morality, however, knows it not. Indeed, too often in the present day, even kindness is, in fact, rather a selfishness shrinking from evil than a real desire for the well-being of others at any cost to ourselves. If it were this latter, surely there would be much more active self-sacrifice than there is. Yet civilization is apt to sneer at any such love for others as makes people forego their own self-interest. Civilization bids every man seek his own, look to himself, live for others in such ways as co-operation suggests for mutual self-interest. David sought the glory of God, looked to God to sustain him and vindicate him, relied upon God's promises to recompense him for any immediate suffering, contemplated a glorious future beyond his present imagination,

in which all the nations of the world should be blessed by the mysterious triumph of his posterity.

If the expressions of his prayer for vengeance took their shape from the excitement of the battle-field of earth, rather than from the intuitions of a recluse, we are not to think he was to blame. Such feelings were not at variance with natural morality, however much they may require to be purified by evangelical aspirations. David's hopes of eternity were the development of visions of earthly success.

David saw the expansion of earthly hopes in heavenly power, though he could not see the contrast. We are too apt to close our eyes to the Divine expansion of life in the Incarnate God, because we do not wish to realize the contrast between earth and Heaven, which that life involves.

We must remember that earthly vengeance is not to be eliminated by neutrality. Christian life must be severe. Holy indignation is necessary to its truth. The more earnest any soul may be in its love of truth, the more will it desire to see wickedness punished.

The two principles of righteous vengeance and brotherly compassion need to be harmonized. Naturally and essentially they are at variance, as the creature and the Creator are, the finite struggle of time and the infinite joy of eternity. They are harmonized by the Cross.

The redemption of Christ brings another law into operation, the law of forgiveness.

That law is not consistent with natural morality. There may be heroic acts of forgiveness outside of Christianity. David himself on many occasions rose up to such actions. He himself did so by a supernatural power, looking forward, however uninstructedly, to Christ. But the Mosaic law of retaliation was not an

imperfection in the system of the law-giver. It was the true expression of a natural justice. The Pentateuchal intimations of something nobler than strict justice are the gleams of a Divine system which was only dawning upon the generations until Christ came. To accept an easy-going forgiveness as a law of life independently of the grace of Christ and the ensample of His Cross would be far more at variance with natural morality than any desire of vengeance which may make two men quits.

Observe, too, even in the midst of the most solemn imprecations, how we find expressions of affection which reveal to us the tenderness of the Psalmist's heart. He seeks not vengeance in any spirit of malice. He knows himself to be God's representative. His enemies have no grudge against him for evil that he has done. They oppose him because God has chosen him. He suffers at their hands for the sake of God.

So also his imprecations are not the creation of his own fretfulness. The evils which he invokes are but the execution of Divine judgements. Hence indeed is the minuteness of their detail. God's law must operate with the utmost minuteness in the Kingdom of Righteousness as in the material universe. The sin of every man's life must affect him in all the relationships of his being. This is a law resulting from the moral unity of the human race. The taint of death must touch upon every fibre of our nature.

And yet we have seen that those minute details of which men complain, especially in Ps. 109, are in reality not minute at all. They are prophetic intimations of vast consequence, affecting the Jewish nation through ages. They are not the morbid gloating of a sensual heart over the sufferings of an enemy. They are the predictions of Divine retribution upon those who

would reject the Redeemer. They ought to be powerful means of bringing home to the heart of Israel the knowledge of their sin, "that they may return, and seek the Lord God, and David, their King" (Hos. iii. 5).

How ready David was to suffer for those who wronged him! How was he herein a type of Christ! The denunciations of Christ receive their force, not their contradiction, from His giving Himself to suffer in order that He might save.

We are not to think that the tender love of Christ's Passion nullifies the severity of His righteous judgement. He is not a mere man so that He can desire for the guilty to be spared as we might do. We see not God. We see not the hatefulness of sin. Christ sees both. Being one with God, He cannot wish that God's judgements should be set aside. He came to satisfy the demands of God's glory, and that involved His suffering. Therefore also He demands satisfaction on behalf of God's justice. We have to take up our Cross in faith and penitence and follow Him. The heart which can know what Jesus has suffered, and not desire to see Him adequately glorified in every creature that has outraged Him,—including his own self in the very first place,—cannot be worthy of Him. It is an outrage against human morality to be content that Jesus should thus suffer and then seek either for self or for any one else to sneak out of the consequences of reparation by an appeal to an unmoral omnipotence for the exercise of an unloving mercy.

Jesus could not think of what He had to suffer for man without invoking vengeance on His enemies if they would not submit to God's glorious law to the full extent of what He Himself suffered when He sought to vindicate that law by the manifestation of redeeming love. It is Jesus who speaks in the Psalms, not David.

We need to bear in mind the woes which He uttered, the awfulness of the final judgement which He pictures in His parables.

More than this. All judgement was committed unto Him because He is the Son of Man. It belongs to Him therefore to carry into execution those judgements which the Psalms, with such terrible detail of woe, can only outline. It belongs therefore to His prophetic love to announce what hereafter in His Divine Sovereignty He will accomplish.

His own utterances in the Gospel are full of warnings as severe as those of the Psalms. It is but idle for us to try and soften down the judgements of God. They must remain in their awfulness. No attempt to minimize them can make the infinite doom of the eternal Judge less stringent in its application. There can be no attainment of life but by coming to Christ to receive life as His gift, and according to His covenant.

Further, we must not think of Christ as submitting with a sort of human reluctance to exercise the judgement which God has entrusted to Him. His human Will is identified with the Divine Will. He therefore desires the punishment of the evil in entire conformity with the Divine judgement. To think otherwise would be to condemn the Divine Justice itself. As for ourselves: we do not see evil as the Soul of Christ sees it in the fulness of active co-operation with God. We belong to nature, and desire natural good as distinct from what is Divine. If we desire evil to be punished, it is with a sense of our own blindness. We desire it with the will of submission rather than of primary volition. We know that we ought to desire not our own will, but the will of God. In Jesus glorified it is not so. That from which we shrink, He with Divine knowledge sees to be absolutely conducive to the ultimate purposes of good.

He therefore desires as Man what His all-holy law ordains as God.

Consequently the imprecations of these Psalms are not merely prophecies and warnings given in love to man. They are prayers for the manifestation of the Divine glory against the sinner. They constitute the necessary appeal of a soul that lives in active love with God. Christ is the Mediator to exert God's goodness towards men, and to demand the entire subdual of man to the Divine Sovereignty.

Christ came not merely to live a holy life upon the earth, and suffer because man had sinned. He came as the Redeemer to bruise the serpent's head, and was to suffer meanwhile at the hands of Satan and of the serpent's seed, avenging God's glory upon the rebel and delivering enslaved humanity from the tyrant. This aspect of His mission, set forth in Genesis, is what the Psalter consistently develops. The Psalms are battle songs of one who suffers in the strife, but looks forward to Divine vengeance upon the great enemy to be developed alongside of the Kingdom of His grace, and finally manifested in the great Day of Judgement.

We are too apt to think of Christ as exhibiting one side of the Divine nature. In the Divine nature, however, there are not two sides. God is love. In every act of His we have to recognize His perfect love. We cannot understand that love in any of His actions. It surpasses us. Nevertheless, we have to recognize it just as much in God's relation to evil, which opposes His love, as in His relation to good, which is the responsive outcome of His love.

All the truth of God is operative through Christ, and the love whereby He comes to be the propitiation for our sins is the action of the same power, which, if it be

not accepted by man, must show itself in the wrath of the Lamb.

The comminatory Psalms therefore are very essential to the completeness of the Psalter, for without them the mind of Christ, the Redeemer, the Sovereign, and the Judge, would not be exhibited to us. If we tone down the character of Christ to suit the aspirations of the human heart, blinded by the corruption of the world, we become guilty of the same sin as the Jews of old, who rejected Him because He did not satisfy their carnal anticipations of the Messianic Kingdom.

These considerations help us to know how we must ourselves recite these Psalms.

We have to recite them in union with Christ, as members of His Body. In the Psalter we have the mind of Christ, and must identify ourselves with His desires. To draw back from the severity of His judgement would be to estrange ourselves from the tenderness of His self-sacrifice. Let us not think that we should love man more truly by trying to love him outside of Christ. The appreciation of judgements awaiting the ungodly is necessary in order to strengthen us for the self-sacrificing demands of Divine love to man. We, alas! would gladly have God's justice left unsatisfied rather than do what a real sense of God's justice would force us to do for the well-being of our fellow-men.

The recitation of these Psalms, along with Christ, is necessary in order to quicken in us an adoring sense of the Divine supremacy, the Divine Righteousness, the unspeakable love which provided the covenant of faith, and cannot suffer that covenant to be set aside.

It is not chiefly with reference to others that we repeat these Psalms. We have to undergo the final judgement of Christ, and we have to consider the necessity of our own hearty acceptance of His covenant. There must be

in us a real love of God, involving the hatred of evil. Without this we cannot have attained to the law of faith. We must never separate the justice of God from the tenderness of Christ. The tenderness of Christ calls us to rise up to that justice, that we may experience its power.

Is it of any use for us to utter the denunciations of God against the Jewish nation in their rebellion? The marvellous detail of these prophecies must be to us a powerful help towards the maintenance of our faith amidst all difficulties, when we see how God has fulfilled His Word towards His ancient people as a judgement for their forsaking Him.

Far more than as an evidence of Christian truth these predictions of woe must make us watchful as to our own position. "Take heed lest He who spared not the natural branches spare not thee. Be not high-minded, but fear" (Rom. xi. 20, 21). Such is the warning which St Paul deduces for us from the consideration of the rejection of Israel.

We need to learn how identical God is in His judgements, whether exerted towards nations or individuals. We must not think that sins national, social, or individual, will escape judgement by any subterfuge of temporal necessity.

Sin must be eternal in its consequences. Its penalties never can be arrested save by accepting Christ as the Mediator. God offers Heaven to all, but He gives it to none save through the covenant of Christ. No good act of man will fail of its due reward, but there can be no goodness whereby man can rise from the death of sin to the life of Heaven, save what we obtain as members of Christ. In these Psalms we see how sin would reign over all without the grace of Christ, and how sin must abide for ever if we reject the grace of Christ.

We must bear in mind to how great an extent the glory of Jesus is actually entrusted to our guardianship; and if these judgements are due to those who outrage that glory, we avow what is due to ourselves if we do not proportionately love it. The one Saviour is the common Saviour of all, and we cannot think of others in their peril of unbelief without remembering that the same peril awaits us unless we try to win them from their state of darkness and antagonism. It is only in proportion as we seek to extend the grace of the Saviour that we ourselves can hope to abide the severity of the Judge of all.

In many of the imprecations of the Psalms, we know that they had an immediate fulfilment with reference to those who assailed Christ. We must regard temporal calamities, whether for ourselves or for others, as being ordained for purposes of discipline to save us from the eternal doom, which otherwise we must meet. Temporal penalties can do us little or no good, unless in accepting them we acknowledge ourselves amenable to the eternal penalty.

We do not speak these words as accusing individuals. We must, however, learn to utter them against the world as such, and the world consists of individuals. It is a snare of Satan to make us think that evil may be hated in the abstract without any personal consideration. Evil has no existence, except in individuals. We must love the sinner while seeking to save him, but the sinner who repudiates salvation passes beyond the reach of love. It were no Christian sentiment to wish simply that this or that person should be saved, unless such salvation were subordinated to the glory of God. To desire our own salvation in a mere spirit of selfishness would turn Heaven into hell. So must these imprecations lift up our hearts from a mere Buddhistic dream to

a personal desire for God as the only source of all good. In Him all good must be found, and the detailed curse invoked against every relationship outside of Him is the acknowledgement that all seeming good outside of His personal love is only evil, and must involve infinity of loss. Evil exists in persons, and the multitude of the ungodly must be contemplated with abhorrence. Good exists only in God. In His Personality all goodness is summed up, sanctifying and beatifying those who live in Him through the mediatorial grace of His Only-Begotten Son by the power of the Life-giving Spirit.

We have to fight against the world. These Psalms remind us of the intensity of strife wherewith the world rages against Christ. It is this strife which we have to share. We cannot treat the world as friends and be ourselves friends to Christ.

V

THE GRADUAL PSALMS

THE fifteen "Psalms of Ascent" are all collected together in one little Psalter. Nothing, therefore, need be said of this arrangement, but it will be well to notice their position. They appear as the outcome of the Eighth Quindecad, which closes with Ps. 120., the first of these fifteen. The Eighth Quindecad numerically symbolizes renewed life, regeneration. They who have been perfected in the way of life, as in the Ps. 119., are ready to ascend to Heaven in contemplative union with Christ. This is not a subsequent advancement but an exercise of the gift of regenerating grace. The last Psalm of the Quindecad of new life in Christ is the first

Psalm of this ladder of Divine Ascent. It leads to the tenth Halleluyah (Ps. 135.). The worshipper who has climbed to the height of his vocation finds himself transported in the glory of the living God. This stairway of Psalmody brings him to the Divine Presence Chamber.

The turning-point in these Psalms ought to be the division between the seventh and eighth. Do we find the anticipation justified?

We might expect the seventh step to bring us to the death of Christ. The outer gate of the Temple represents the close of Christ's redemptive ministry. The eighth is the beginning of the heavenly Kingdom.

This is exactly what these Psalms imply. In the seventh Psalm the Lord is represented turning back the captivity of Zion, doing great things whereof we rejoice. He has been sowing in tears, and now He is going away, but He will come again and bring His sheaves with Him (Ps. 126.). The good seed is to be sown in the earth, and as He dies, that seed will not remain alone, but will bring forth much fruit.

The eighth Psalm is a Psalm of the Kingdom. It is a Psalm of Solomon. As David is the type of the suffering Saviour, so Solomon is a type of the Prince of Peace, who "builds His stories (His steps) in the heavens" (Am. ix. 6). So He sings of the greater hopes that remain for David's Kingdom, "Except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it" (Ps. 127.). Solomon's buildings would soon be laid waste, but Messiah buildeth to Eternity.

And then how does He build? The building of God (1 Cor. iii. 9) is not the putting together of lifeless stones. Messiah builds up His Church by the gift of "children, the fruit of the womb" of Divine grace, generations that shall succeed one to another and never fail until the eternal glory is attained. Moses

was a servant faithful in all his house for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after, "but Christ is come, a Son over His own House, whose House are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Heb. iii. 6). Messiah is the Heir of Abraham, to whom the promises were made, and in Him we, of all nations of the world, are "builded together for the habitation of God by the Spirit."

It is difficult to say what may be the best moral application of these fifteen steps of Psalmody. Of course it would be possible to suggest many courses of fifteen steps, describing moral or spiritual progress more or less akin to the teaching of each Psalm, but the motive of the series begins with the trouble of the Psalmist. He desires to be set free from the lying lips of the world and its prince, who is the father of lies. Afterwards we reach the sanctuary, there to address the words of gratulation to the servants of our King and receive the Divine welcome as they greet us. The general drift is plain. They who dwell by night in those courts may well be taken to mean the holy angels abiding in the daylight of God's Presence during the night-season of our earthly life. The blessing of the Creator of all is given to us from Him who is enthroned in Mount Zion, the Head of the Church. Thus the Eternal Day of the Lord opens upon us. We find ourselves in the presence of JAH, our Creator, Redeemer, Avenger. It is the Lord's Day, when we sing Ps. 135., and we are free.

The fifteen Psalms of Ascent show the fulness of Christ's Presence with us, *in via*, upon our pilgrimage. Ps. 135., the closing Psalm of the ninth Quindecad, shows the Divine glory of Christ into which we are welcomed *in patria*, attaining to the heavenly throne.

The break also in the series at the end of the seventh Psalm is very remarkable as indicating the change from

the outer court, and our admission to the inner heavenly sanctuary, from the suffering David to the glorified Son of David.

As Ps. 15. is the pattern of JAH set before us, so this little Psalter of fifteen Psalms describes the people of JAH as they follow Him.

It has been supposed that these Psalms are called Graduals because of the stepping character of their composition, the repeated catch-words by which the Psalmist marks his progress. But such a technicality does not seem worthy of the Divine Inspiration. Indeed, these Psalms are thus technically formed, because that mode of expression suits the spiritual purpose of the Psalmist. The progress is thus technically marked because they are Psalms of progress.

While the division into seven and eight seems for many purposes to be the one that is preferable, yet the Gradual Psalms are so often recited with an arrangement in three fives that the following analysis may be useful.

Ps. 120.	The predestined Humanity in the bondage of the flesh.		
" 121.	"	"	in the expectation of Divine life.
" 122.	"	"	in the joy of the sanctuary.
" 123.	"	"	in the security of Divine service.
" 124.	"	"	in deliverance from the deep waters of the grave.
" 125.	The City of Righteousness in her stability.		
" 126.	"	"	in her exodus from captivity.
" 127.	"	"	in her fruitfulness as the Household of Christ.
" 128.	"	"	in her perpetuity.
" 129.	"	"	in her triumphant vindication from all her enemies.
" 130.	The Incarnate God humbled for man's redemption.		

Ps. 131.	The Incarnate God bearing the discipline of life in separation from the Father's glory.		
" 132.	"	"	a Priest upon the throne of David.
" 133.	"	"	gathering the people into the fellowship of the Divine Unction.
" 134.	"	"	glorified in His people on the heavenly height.

VI

THE HALLELUYAH PSALMS

THE fifteen Halleluyah Psalms are marked by a division into seven single Halleluyahs and eight double ones. This has been noticed already.

The praise of God has its beginning as far as our fallen race is concerned in acts of penitence. So it is Ps. 102. which initiates the Halleluyahs of the Psalter with the declaration that "the people which shall be born shall praise JAH (Ps. 102. 18). When God hears the prayers of the afflicted, the afflicted one in his sorrow begins to hear the jubilant shout of the accepted multitude.

In Ps. 103. we find the Kingdom of Messiah established in its glory in answer to the prayer of penitence.

A Halleluyatic Trilogy follows, tracing the development of the Kingdom from its original intention at creation until the Exodus from Egypt (Pss. 104.-106.).

The call of Messiah to sit upon the throne of God is the perfecting of that kingdom which has been marred in its development by the sin of man. Now then follows the second Halleluyatic trilogy, the Trilogy of the Covenant (111.-113.).

Nature trembled of old at God's Presence. A greater

manifestation of that Presence is at hand now that God, in His mediatorial Majesty, reigns in Heaven. The Halleluyatic Trilogy of our eternal life follows (Pss. 115.-117.).

After the Triumph of JAH, and the eightfold way of life and the Psalms of Ascent, we come to Ps. 135., JAH, the living God, reigning in Jerusalem. This closes the ninth Quindecad of the Psalter with a double Halleluyah, preparing for the great Hallel (Ps. 136.), and the tenth Quindecad, which begins with that great Song of Praise and ends with a Pentateuch of Halleluyahs (Pss. 146.-150.).

VARIOUS PHRASES MUSICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE EMPLOYED IN THE PSALTER

"To the Chief Musician." Fifty-five Psalms are thus addressed, *i.e.* they are specially marked for liturgical purposes. We can scarcely say why this heading should be prefixed to some and not to others, for others were certainly intended for public worship. The chief musician was to arrange for the careful orchestration of these Psalms.

It occurs nineteen times in Book I.

„	twenty-five	„	Book II.
„	eight	„	Book III.
„	(vacat)	„	Book IV.
„	three	„	Book V.

"Selah" occurs seventy-one times in the Psalter.

Seventeen times in Book I. in nine Psalms.

Thirty „ Book II. in seventeen Psalms.

Twenty „ Book III. in eleven Psalms.

(Vacat) „ Book IV.

Four „ Book V. in two Psalms.

Seventy-one „ Psalter in thirty-nine Psalms.

Apparently it implies that the music is to break out in fuller strain, whether by *interlude* or *crescendo*. The word does not necessarily imply a cessation of the voice. It occurs sometimes in the middle of a strophe. It is found in scarcely any Psalms which are not addressed to the chief musician.

Outside of the Psalter it occurs three times in the song of Habakkuk.

"Higgaion" occurs once, with "Selah" following (Ps. 9. 17).

This probably means that the accompaniment is to be solemn—*ritardando e crescendo*—so as to symbolize the awful punishment of the ungodly.

Mizmor (Psalm) is the title of fifty-seven Psalms.

Shir (song) is the title of thirty.

The double name is applied to thirteen.

Tehillah (Praise Psalm) gives the name to the whole volume of the Psalter. It is, however, only applied in the title to one Psalm, David's last Alphabetical Psalm, which precedes the five Halleluyahs at the end (Ps. 145). That Psalm by its position, sums up the book.

Tephillah (Prayer). The two first books seem to be called "The Prayers of David," but the special title of "Prayer" is only given to one of them (Ps. 17). It is also given in the later books to Pss. 86, 90, 102, 142, *i.e.* to five Psalms in the Psalter. The Psalmist continually appeals to God to hear his prayer.

"Shiggaion" is a wandering, impassioned ode, a dithyramb. It is only applied to Ps. 7. Outside of the Psalter we find it in the prayer of Habakkuk.

"Maskil" is a title prefixed to thirteen Psalms, mostly in Book II. The word occurs in Ps. 47. 8, which enables us to get the better idea of its meaning. "Sing a Maskil," *i.e.* a Psalm of deep perception. The King of all the earth came to "bear witness unto the truth." They "who are of the truth" recognize His Kingdom. Maskil expresses the intuition of faith, beholding the invisible. It corresponds with the Chokmah, or Wisdom, whence Divine revelation issues. Christ "opened the understandings of the Apostles, that they might understand the Scriptures" (Luke xxiv. 45). The opening

of the moral capacity by penitence and faith may be contrasted with the "opening of the eyes" in mere prophetic gaze to behold future events while "the foolish heart remains darkened" (Num. xxiv. 16; Rom. i. 21). Delitzsch applies to this word the "spiritual songs" of Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16.

"Miktam" is the name of six Davidic Psalms (Pss. 16. 56.-60.). They may be called "epigrammatic," as having some line or thought which is brought out into prominence, by a refrain, or by some introductory formula. It will be observable that they include the Trilogy of the Crucifixion with the remarkable prophecy of the dispersion of the Jews as a memorial of God's justice into all lands and the great victory of the Valley of Salt.

The word is sometimes translated after the LXX., "a sculpture-ode."

"Catchword" does not so much express its meaning as "watchword." It contains a sentence to be remembered, like an illumination having a text or philosophic maxim for its centre.

Ps. 16. is noticeable because of the distinct expectation of the resurrection with which it closes. Pss. 56.-60. emphasize the same teaching. The Silent Dove of the far-off regions in Ps. 56. expresses the Divine silence of Him who opened not His mouth when seized by the mystical Philistines in Gath. The Spirit resting upon Him was anointing Him none the less because He spake not in the power of the Spirit's sovereignty to crush His enemies. The three Miktams "Destroy not" indicate the three days of the Great Jonah, the Dove. He went in the power of the Holy Ghost to triumph over Satan, and death could not destroy Him. Ps. 60., the last of the six Miktams of David, celebrates the victory of the Crucified. Ps. 56. showed the silence with

which Christ entered the grave. Ps. 60. shows the Divine power of the victory of holiness wherein God speaks.

N.B.—Thirteen is a number of penitence and six of worldly power. We may observe these ideas apparently associated with the Maskil and Miktam Psalms respectively.

Titles are prefixed to some Psalms which seem to refer to popular songs to whose melody the Psalm should be sung.

"The Death of the Son" (Ps. 9.).

"The Hind of the Morning" (Ps. 22.).

"The Silent Dove of the Far-off Regions" (Ps. 55.).

"Destroy Not" (Pss. 57.-59. and Ps. 75.).

In all cases the words which seem to be meaningless to the *prima facie* exegesis serve remarkably to illustrate the mystical signification which devotion will recognize.

Whatever may have been their origin, one can scarcely doubt that they were inserted by Divine inspiration with this prophetic purpose in view.

"On Gittith." This is prefixed to three Psalms.

Probably this was some special musical form belonging to the city of Goliath. We can scarcely suppose that it is destitute of mystical meaning, since that city was so remarkably associated with David's typical character. His victory over the giant champion, the distrust shown to him when he was discovered in that city, his feigned madness when he made crosses upon the gates, the sending away of the Hebrews from Gath just before the battle in which Saul died—set before us a series of typical occurrences. The mystical import of this narrative helps us to understand not only Ps. 34., but also what we may call the Gittith Trilogy (Pss. 8., 81., 84.).

1. The Divine predestination of man to conquer Satan.

2. The Divine sovereignty sung by the Asaphite, as a call to be independent of worldly idols of power.

3. The loveliness of the Incarnate life to be recognized by the weepers in their pilgrimage.

David's victory over Goliath was achieved "in the Name of the Lord God of Israel, whom he had defied." So this trilogy bursts forth in praise of God's Name as the strength of the Son of Man, the covenanted claim of Israel, when God called His Son out of Egypt, the loving reward of all who put their trust in Him.

"On Gittith" may be taken as a spiritual ideograph of our Lord's warning: "I have chosen you out of the world; therefore the world hateth you." The strength of God's people is not from the world but against the world.

"Sheminith." The Octave. Probably Pss. 6., 12., which have this prefix, were to be sung by bass voices, "an octave below."

"Alamoth." Treble voices. There were boy choirs in the Temple, and Delitzsch says: "Oriental, more especially Jewish, song is fond of falsetto." The word does not imply female singers, but "upon the stave of female voices."

Ps. 46. is "the Psalm of the Church Militant," and we may take these "virgin voices" as symbolizing the purity of heart wherewith we must praise God.

"On Neginoth." Six Psalms for stringed instruments (Pss. 4., 6., 54., 55., 67., 76.).

"Neginah" is found once, *i.e.* the singular number (Ps. 61.).

"To Nechiloth" (Ps. 5.). To a flute accompaniment. The singer might touch the strings of Neginoth, but he could not blow the flute and sing at the same time. Hence the difference of the preposition.

ON THE NUMBER 888

THE number 888 has from the earliest times been recognized as a symbol of the Incarnate Son of God, the Second Adam, in whom humanity attains to renewal by a second birth.

It is the arithmetical expression for our Lord's name in Greek. Jesus=888.

Of this we read in the Sibylline verses (lib. i. 324).

ἤξει σαρκοφορὸς θνητοῖς ὁμοιούμενος ἐν γῇ·
τέσσαρα φωνήεντα φέρει, τὰ δ' ἄφωνα δι' αὐτοῦ
δίσσων ἀστραγάλων ἀριθμὸν δ' ὅλον ἐξονομήνω,
ὄκτω γὰρ μονάδας, ὅσας δεκάδας, ἐπὶ τούτοις
ἤδ' ἑκατοντάδας ὄκτω ἀπιστοτέροις ἀνθρώποις
ὄνομα δηλώσει.

It is remarkable how often this number occurs as the numerical value of Hebrew phrases which point onward to the promised Messiah. That the number should occur might not be strange. The noticeable fact is, that whenever this number does occur, it seems always to have a Messianic reference.

Dr Mahan, in his Treatise on mystical numbers, has gathered together a large number of curious instances from various parts of Holy Scripture. It will be sufficient for us to mention such occurrences as are found in the Hebrew Psalter. These have not been noticed by him. For further illustration of the subject

the reader is requested to consult Dr Mahan. His Treatise forms the second volume of his collected works.

As the whole of the Psalter requires yet to be counted out, there may of course be many passages, probably there are, which would furnish a like result. It needs only to be said here at the outset that no instance of such occurrence has been omitted, because it might seem to be insignificant or antagonistic.

- Ps. 3. 4. "No salvation for Him" (=888).—Nay, He needs no Saviour.
- " 8. 5. "What is man that Thou art mindful of him? and the Son of Man, that Thou visitest Him?" (=1888). Jesus is the predestined Man, the object of God's love
- " 18. 51. The Salvation of His King (=888).
- " 19. 1. "The heavens declare the glory of God" (=888).
- " 20. 6. "We will rejoice in Thy salvation, and triumph in the Name of the Lord our God: The Lord perform all Thy petitions" (2664=3×888).
- " 30. 10. "Shall the dust give thanks unto Thee? Shall it declare Thy truth?" (=888).—The dust of death gives praise when Jesus wakes it to life by His resurrection.
- " 30. 12. "Thou hast put off (=888) my sackcloth."—The Resurrection accomplished for us by Christ.
- " 35. 10. "Who deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him: yea, the poor and him that is in misery from him that spoileth him" (=888).
- " 36. 12. "O let not there come against me the foot of pride, nor the hand of the ungodly (=888) to cast me down."—Antichrist boasts to be equal to Christ. Hence the numbers proper to Christ are often in Holy Scripture used with reference to Antichrist.
- " 45. 4. "Thou art fairer than the children of men: full of grace are Thy lips, because God hath blessed Thee for ever" (2888).
51. 17. "Thou shalt open (=888) my lips."—The lips of man opened to speak to God by the Incarnation of the Eternal Word,

- Ps. 68. 35. "*O God, wonderful art Thou in Thy holy places, even Godhead*" (=888).
- " 72. 3. "*The mountains shall bring peace, and the little hills righteousness unto the people*" (1776 = 2×888).
- " 78. 54. "*The mountain which Thou hast purchased with Thy Right Hand*" (=888).
- " 80. 17. "*Burnt with fire*" (=888).—The condition of the vine which was to sprout afresh by Messiah's Incarnation.
- " 91. 11. "*For He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee, to keep Thee*" (=888) in all Thy ways."—The words quoted by Satan reckon up the name of his Conqueror. It seems as if he could go no further.
- " 92. 9. "*But Thou, Lord, art the Most High for evermore*" (=888).
- " 98. 4. "*The salvation of our God*" (=888).—A Hebrew rendering of the Name of Jesus. The verse is a prophecy of the acceptance of Jesus as the Saviour by all nations of the world.
- " 104. 28. "*Thou openest* (=888) Thy hand, and they are filled with good."—Christ, the Right Hand, by whom all God's gifts are given.
- " 106. 17. "*The earth opened* (=888) and swallowed up Dathan."—The judgement upon those who reject Christ in His representative.
- " 111. 9. "*He sent redemption unto His people: He hath commanded His covenant for ever: holy and reverend is His Name*" (2888).
- " 113. 2-9 = 11552 = 4×2888 .
- " 116. 16. "*Thou hast broken* (=888) my bonds in sunder."
- " 119. 74. "*They that fear Thee will be glad when they see me*" (=888).
- " 119. 77. "*Thy law is my delight*" (1776 = 2×888).
- " 119. 92. *Idem*.
- " 119. 174. *Idem*.

Observe how all these passages evidently bear upon the person, character, and work of Messiah. The same is true in other parts of the Hebrew Bible.

As a numerical valuation this number nowhere occurs in either Testament, and there is no proper name of any individual either in the Hebrew or the Greek which gives this number. It seems to be reserved for JESUS.

These instances are enough to indicate a Divine intention accompanying the words of the Psalmist.

Perhaps the most remarkable of them is Ps. 98. 4, which may be said to be a verbal prophecy of the name by which Messiah should be known universally in the Catholic Church—"All the ends of the world have seen JESUS." It is emphasized by being found again in Isa. lii. 10, just before the great prophecy respecting the elect Servant.

Jesus is the *Opener*. A single word having this numerical value might appear to be accidental, especially when it has no very special meaning. Nevertheless, it becomes all the more significant when we find a word of such common use never occurring in this form except in such combination as to give it a special Messianic reference.

God *opening* the lips in praise (Ps. 51. 17).

God *opening* the hand in bounty to His creatures (Ps. 104. 28).

It occurs with reference to *charity* to a poor brother (Deut. xv. 8, 11). Thou shalt *open* thine hand. So must the people of God be like God.

The earth *opening* in judgement to devour Korah. The same word is used in Num. xvi. 32.

It occurs again, the earth *opening* to bring forth salvation (Isa. xlv. 8).

The daughter of Pharaoh *opened* the ark and saw the child (Ex. ii. 6). She was the instrument of Messianic interposition for the law as preparing the redemptive ministry.

When Solomon dedicated his Temple he prayed that God's eyes might be *opened* to those who should pray (1 Kings viii. 29, 52), the mediatorial prerogative of Jesus.

The prophet must *open* the door and flee when he had anointed Jehu to be king, that he might exercise vengeance upon Ahab.

Jael *opened* a bottle of milk for Sisera ere she slew him (Judges iv. 19).

Thou *openest* my sackcloth to put off the misery of my mortal condition (Ps. 30. 12), loosing the outward nature.

Thou *openest* my bonds to set me free (Ps. 116. 16).

Moses was to *engrave* upon the onyx-stones the names of the twelve tribes of Israel (Ex. xxviii. 9, 11, 36). Those twelve names were the ancestry of Jesus, and were to be presented before God by the true priesthood of the coming Mediator, who should open Heaven to them by Divine power as He would open their hearts to God by renewing grace.

Isaiah was to *open* his sackcloth and walk naked as a symbol of Divine judgement upon Egypt (Isa. xx. 2). Isaiah was a type of Jesus walking upon the earth, and, by the mystery of His Incarnation, loosing man's natural sinfulness.

Canst thou *open* the bands of Orion? (Job xxxviii. 31). Orion is the fool that shall not be loosed for ever. That constellation was supposed to be an impious giant who rebelled against God.

These are the only passages in which the word "open" occurs in such a form as to give the number 888. It will be seen that they all point to Him who openeth and no man shutteth, the opening of judgement, the opening of grace, the opening of resurrection from the grave, the opening of bounty, the opening of charity, the opening of Divine election.

Let it be noticed that expressions which have reference to Christ have a tendency to bring forward the number 8—the number of renewal—either as a digit or as a factor. The triple 8 is its chief expression.

The total value of the two prefatory Psalms, Pss. 1., 2., is 38988, where it will be seen we have the three eights,

and along with them the 3 and the 9, which are symbols of Divine life and power.

There is, however, no other name in the Bible, either Hebrew or Greek, which gives the 888, but only the name of Jesus. That name stands alone.

Indeed it is remarkable, in counting up the numerical value of Biblical phrases, how seldom the three digits are identical.

As Eight is the number of regeneration, so Six is the number of worldly power, the old Adam, created on the sixth day of the week. It is therefore generally connected with the evil of worldly power, as in the well-known number of the Beast in the Apocalypse, the three sixes being opposed to the three eights of the new Man, the Redeemer.

However, the 666 does not seem to occur often in the Psalter. We find it in Ps. 22. 15. *All my bones*=666. Worldly power is the weakness of that humanity on which mankind are apt to rely for strength. But Jesus feels the burden of its weakness!

Where we have three identical digits, it will probably be found that the symbolical meaning has special prominence.

ONE : Perfection.

Ps.	59. 17.	To Thee my strength, etc. . . .	= 1000.
Hos.	i. 10.	Sons of the living God	= 111.
Ps.	22. 30.	All that go down to the dust shall kneel before him	= 1112.
"	33. 5.	The Lord loveth . . . Lord . . .	= 1112.
"	8. 1.	O Lord, our . . . earth . . .	= 1115.
"	8. 5.	What is man . . . him . . .	= 1115.
"	22. 28.	All the ends . . . unto the Lord . . .	= 1116.
"	25. 22.	Deliver Israel, O God	= 1117.
"	36. 7.	Thy judgements like the great deep . . .	= 1117.
"	63. 5.	As long as I live . . . name . . .	= 1117.
"	20. 10.	Save, Lord, and hear us . . . Thee . . .	= 1118.

TWO: Expectation. Sonship. Prayer.

- Ps. 28. 7. The Lord, my strength . . . and
my shield =222.
„ 21. 7. For Thou shalt . . . countenance . . . =3222.

THREE: Divine Life.

- Ps. 24. 8. The Lord, strong and mighty . . . =333.
„ 40. 12. Withdraw not Thou, etc. (1332) . . =333 × 4.
„ 54. 7. He shall . . . unto mine enemies. . =1333.
„ 18. 36. Thou hast given . . . make me great =3333.

This verse is very remarkable as having the four identical digits. It sets forth the Divine life of Messiah as manifested by His endurance of the Passion which God rewards.

FOUR: The Cross. The World.

- Ps. 39. 13. I am a stranger with Thee . . . =444.
It is the appeal of those who are Crucified
with Christ.

- Ps. 119. 33. The way of Thy statutes . . . =444.
Forty-four frequently occurs in the head-
ings of the Psalms. "David's." None
can sing as a true David save one who
is crucified to the world.

FIVE: The Law. Sacrifice. Righteousness.

- Ps. 31. 5. Draw me . . . for me . . . =1665 = 3 × 555.

SIX: The Power of the World with which we have to struggle,
needing the Sanctification of Grace.

- Ps. 5. 9. Lead me . . . because of mine
enemies =1666.
„ 22. 17. All my bones =666.
„ 70. 6. O Lord . . . tarrying . . . =666.

SEVEN: The number of the Holy Ghost and the Covenant of
Grace.

- Ps. 9. 11. Praise the Lord . . . Zion . . . =777.
„ 12. 1. Help me, Lord, . . . left . . . =777.
The faithful members of the Covenant are
failing.

NINE: Divine Glory and Judgement.

- Ps. 9. 20, 21. Up, Lord . . . but men . . . =2999.

TEN: Moral perfection and security.

- Ps. 46. We will not fear . . . moved . . . =1010.

FOURTEEN: The Davidic number, return to God.

- Ps. 31. Thou hast redeemed . . . truth . . . =1414.

SEVENTEEN: God's Covenanted People.

- Ps. 17. 1. Hear the right . . . my complaint . . =1717.
„ 56. 13. Unto Thee . . . thanks . . . =1717.

NINETEEN.

- Ps. 25. 22. Deliver Israel . . . his troubles . . =1919.

FORTY-ONE: Probation of faith.

- Ps. 28. 1. Unto Thee will I cry . . . fit . . . =4141.

It may further be noticed that the number 888 in the preceding table specially marks those Psalms which have a special individual importance. Thus Ps. 3. is seen, as it were, to begin with the Name of Jesus, the object of execration, the Jews crying out against Him. "Jesus! the Samaritan! the Blasphemer! the object of God's abhorrence!" But Ps. 3. is the very first Psalm of the Psalter celebrating the entrance of the Redeemer who must bear the enmity of the serpent's seed, for Pss. 1., 2. are prefatory.

So Ps. 8. is the Psalm of man's predestination; Ps. 18., the Psalm of the Redeemer's triumphant deliverance; Ps. 19., and afterwards Ps. 119., the Psalm of the law of the Lord; Ps. 20., introductory to the great struggle; Ps. 30., the new Temple; Ps. 35., the angel of vengeance; Pss. 45., 51., the Incarnation of the Word, and the assumption by the Eternal Wisdom of the likeness of sinful flesh; Ps. 72., the enthronement of the Son of David; Ps. 91., the Psalm quoted by the Tempter in the wilderness; Ps. 111., the covenant of Melchizedek; Ps. 113., the first of the Paschal Hallel.

By the recurrence of this number, the Name of Jesus seems to assert itself upon all great occasions as the keynote of the Psalter. Is the Church burnt with fire? It is Jesus. "It is I: be not afraid." Is Dathan's company destroyed? It is Jesus whom they have rejected who works the vengeance.

ON THE NUMERICAL NOTATION OF THE PSALMS

WE have seen that the Psalter is arranged upon a structural basis in harmony with the mystical interpretation of numbers, and occasionally reference has been made to phrases in which the law of sacred numbers comes into operation.

It is further noticeable that every one of the Psalms seems to occupy the place which its own number suggests as fitting for it. We have thus a double law of numbers, an individual number for each Psalm, and a collective arrangement under which they are grouped.

One thing more has to be noticed with reference to the numbers employed in Holy Scripture. As each letter has its proper number, it follows that every name in Holy Scripture has a number belonging to it, and it is remarkable that we can almost always trace a connection between the individuals who bear the name and the signification intimated by the number. Many names and the persons who bore them are of course wanting in special importance, but sometimes the meaning of the name and at other times the character of the individual, are so marked as to give a real effect of personification, which adds greatly to the appreciation of the Psalm. Very few names have been omitted which come within the number of the Psalter, but they were meaningless and the persons obscure.

This subject has been carefully worked out by Dr Mahan in his *Treatise on mystical numbers*,¹ but he does not notice the illustration which the theory gains by application to the Psalter. Such is the wonderful unity of life pervading the Word of God! Of course we cannot use any imagination of our own as a basis of *argument*. As matter of *illustration*, this historical parallelism supplies much that is interesting. If in many cases it seems to be merely accidental, yet in many cases the fitness is so great as to imply a Divine intention which helps the spiritual exegesis. It is also so frequent as to imply a law.

Nor is this all. We may take the Hebrew words out of the Lexicon, and it must awaken a wonder that the sacred language is thus arranged to suit the Sacred Book.

Let us take the Psalms in brief review. In the larger numbers we cannot assign mystical meanings to the number as it stands. We must then divide it into its factors, or if the number be a Prime, having no factors, we must take the digits individually.

The coincidences which are noticed in this brief review, will serve not only to illustrate the Psalms with which they are connected, but also to elucidate the typical meaning of many passages of Holy Scripture by the light which the Psalm sheds upon it. Many of these references will be helpful in using various passages of Holy Scripture for meditation.

PS. ONE : Perfection.—The perfect Man.

PS. TWO : The Incarnation.—The Son of God.

PS. THREE : Divine Life.—Messiah's entrance on earthly Life, the Seed of the woman coming to bear the enmity of the fallen race, to avenge His Father upon the serpent and his seed.

To illustrate the number Three we have the following

¹ The collected works of the late Milo Mahan, D.D., 3 vols. Pott and Young, New York.

words, and the subsequent numbers have similar illustrations:—

FATHER (*Heb. Ab*)=3.

HE COMES (*Heb. Ba*)=3. "The Coming One" was Messiah's name among the Jews.

PS. FOUR: Earthly extension. The Cross. Death. The death of the Redeemer.

PS. FIVE: Righteousness. The law. Human perfection.

This Morning Hymn points to the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Risen Saviour, not as humbled to death for our sins, but claiming the glory of His righteousness in the Resurrection Morning.

PS. SIX: Worldly perfection rejecting God.

The Psalm of the Sin-Bearer bearing the burden of our sinful humanity, against which He has to struggle.

LINEN. (*Heb. Bad*)=6 (Lev. xvi. 4; Ex. xxviii. 42.). The priestly Ephod. The clothing of the Day of Atonement. The clothing of innocence upon the body of shame.

PS. SEVEN: Rest. God's creative work ended. Christ's redemption completed by the descent into hell. Our Baptism into the Death of Christ. Deadness to the world. This is the number of the Holy Spirit, who preserveth them that are true of heart. Satan finally cast into the abyss.

GAD=7. "A troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last" (Gen. xlix. 19). A type of the Church, feeble in this world of death, but ever militant and in the end triumphant over the enemy.

CORIANDER SEED (*Heb. Gad*)=7 (Ex. xvi. 31). The manna. The food of the daily pilgrimage in the kingdom of grace.

FISH (*Heb. Dag*)=7. In Jonah the fish is the type of Christ's grave. "Out of the eater came forth sweetness."

AGAG=7. The forerunner of Antichrist who appears again as Haman in the days of Ahasuerus. The enemy must be slain by the Redeemer.

HE PERISHETH (*Abad*): Man's natural condition. "A Syrian ready to perish was my father" (Deut. xxvi. 5). Called out of death to the kingdom of grace.

PS. EIGHT: Renewal. Regeneration.

Man attains to his original predestination by the exaltation of the Redeemer as the Head of the new race. The regenera-

tion of infants building up the Church, hushing the enemy and the avenger.

HE THAT COMETH (*Habba*). *Vide num. 3. supra*. The Jewish name for Messiah (Matt. ii. 3; Ps. 118. 26).

DOEG=8. The enemy to be conquered. (*Another spelling* Ps. 14. 23.) "The babes and sucklings" specially connect this Psalm with his history.

PS. NINE: Divine Life and Power. God the Judge of all. The first of the comminatory Psalms.

HEGE=9. The Chamberlain who had charge of the Jewish Captives, a type of the world holding the Church militant in bondage. Hadassah (Ps. 74.) typifies the Church wedded to the world. Yet through her, God will execute judgement.

A BROTHER (*Ach*)=9. The great Judge is our Brother (Heb. ii. 11), our Goel, requiting our blood (verse 13).

A GARMENT (*Begad*)=9. "The filthy rags of earthly righteousness" (Isa. lxiv. 6), which God casts away. The outward heavens "wax old as a garment" (Ps. 102. 27; Isa. l. 9, li. 6). The beautiful garment of righteousness hereafter (Isa. lii. 1)!

PS. TEN: Moral perfection, as set forth in the Ten Commandments, is the law of judgement. The ungodly perish at the presence of Christ.

ZEEB (overthrown by Gideon). The "wolf" specially symbolizing the Roman power which should punish the Jews, but would itself be overthrown in the final judgement on Antichrist (John x. 12).

A SHEARING (*Gehz*)=10. The harvest of the world at the coming of Christ. "He shall descend as rain upon the mown grass" (Ps. 72. 6). The doom of worldly power and the blessing to the faithful.

PS. ELEVEN: Sin, the transgression of the Law. This number exceeds the Ten of perfect accomplishment. It also symbolizes sin as decay, for one is wanting to the Twelve of perfect organization.

This Psalm speaks of the feebleness of God's chosen people, while yet they wait in confidence upon Him. Judas, one of the foundations of the Church, was cast down, leaving but eleven at the outset. So from age to age.

CHAG (a festival)=11. Specially used of Passover and Tabernacles. The manifestation of redemptive powers.

GOB (a pit)=11. Elhanan slew the brother of Goliath, the giant, a type of the greater Bethlehemite bruising the serpent's head in hell.

PS. TWELVE: Ecclesiastical organization. The building of the Body of Christ ($12=3 \times 4$). The Divine and human nature in one Person. Seven= $3+4$ is the number of grace as given to man, but not in personal unity.

God announces His own uprising as Man to avenge His people.

AHAB (*father's brother*)=12. The representation of the boastfulness of the ungodly in the last days. Yet will Elias come, and one greater than Jehu, to avenge the poor.

GOG=12. To be overthrown when Christ appears. The World perishes. The Church lives evermore.

DESTRUCTION (*Abadiah*). Never full (Prov. xxvii. 20).

A LOST THING (*Abidah*). Christ comes to save that which was lost from the power of the prince of the world that stole it (Ex. xxii. 9), even God's own Image in man.

N.B.—All the multiples of twelve in the Psalter have reference to the building up of the City of God, the Body of Christ.

PS. THIRTEEN: Rebellion and redemption.

This Psalm expresses the longing of the soul burdened with sin for the promised redemption.

AHAVA=13. Here Ezra kept a fast when bringing the people back to Jerusalem. They might well sing this Psalm on that occasion.

LOVE (*Ahabah*)=13. "To whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much."

ONE (*Echad*)=13. There is only one Redeemer. He will come, however long we have to wait for Him.

N.B.—The series of Psalms multiples of thirteen all speak of man's need of redemption, and, in the last book, of Christ's victory as effecting it.

PS. FOURTEEN: Acceptance with God. This number gains emphasis because St Matthew arranges our Lord's genealogy in three Fourteens: *first*, from Abraham to David, when the promise was made sure; *second*, to the Captivity, when it was suspended by man's sin; *third*, to Christ, when it was fulfilled.

DAVID (the beloved)=14. It is the number of "the man after God's own heart" whom God looked to find (verse 3). The Son of David appears in the Psalm following.

DOEG=14. This name has occurred *already* with another spelling. Doeg, prophetically *overthrown*. This Psalm expresses his empty *self-confidence* as manifested in the triumph of the world. Yet again he appears in Ps. 23., the *murderer*. He cannot harm those who walk with Christ dead to the world.

VALLEY (*Gay*)=14. It is through the valley of death that the redeemed returns with the true David. David is the promised King. He "looks down from heaven," coming "to bring salvation out of Zion."

PS. FIFTEEN: the special number of JAH, *i.e.* of the Lord, our righteousness, which is expressed by the factors 3×5 .

This Psalm stands markedly out as the description of the MAN whom God desired to find; the Saviour for whom Psalm 14. was longing. He fulfils the oath to Abraham, though it involves His own death.

PS. SIXTEEN: 8×2 implies renewal; 4×4 security.

This Psalm tells of the universal security of the world renewed in the resurrection of Christ. Hell is conquered. "Pleasures for evermore at God's Right Hand" show forth the "excellence" of God's Name, celebrated in Ps. 8. as being now extended to the blessed that are with Christ.

EHUD (*union*)=16. He slew Eglon at the Jordan, the river which symbolizes death. His left hand typifies Christ's Humanity; the right thigh girt with the sword, the God-head.

AHAZ (*holding*)=16. He "offered drink offerings of blood" to Moloch, offerings of death, void of resurrection-life. Not so the true Ahaz, Christ, the Ram, *held* in the thickets by His horns, His double nature (Gen. xxii. 13). God *holds* Him by His Right Hand (Ps. 73. 23).

PS. SEVENTEEN: The special number of God's chosen people. Ten of moral perfection, seven of grace. It symbolizes God's people in their probation, as 153 ($=17 \times 9$) symbolizes their glory.

This Psalm speaks of the delight of the saints looking to be perfected in the likeness of God.

SACRIFICE (*Zebah*)=17. This is the foundation of the covenanted life. The saints in Christ are a living sacrifice to God. This fellowship is their joy (Ps. 50. 23).

ZEBAH was one of the slaughtered Midianitish kings. He made sacrifice to a god that could not help (Jud. vii. 25).

GOOD (*Tob*)=17.

TOB=17. The land to which Jephthah fled when driven out by his brethren as the son of a strange woman.

Jesus abode in the Divine goodness, being Himself the true Sacrifice. His brethren drove him out as a Samaritan, but in the end they will come to Him and claim Him as their true Deliverer. God will show the glory of His covenant.

SINEW (*Geyd*)=17. It is used of the sinew which shrank when Jacob obtained the special blessing of God's covenant and the name of Israel. The suffering of the flesh is good, since it obtains the covenanted power of the Spirit of God, if offered in that love which is the life of all true sacrifice.

N.B.—The series of Psalms upon a basis of seventeens.

PS. EIGHTEEN: Regeneration and renewal in perfect moral obedience. 6×3 , the outward universe renewed with Divine life. 9×2 , the Divine glory of the Incarnate Son.

The series of eighteens has a character of grandeur. It culminates in Ps. 72., which is the Royal chaunt closing Book II., and Ps. 144., which arouses the closing chords of Book V., being the exordium of the final jubilation.

The Seed of the woman, the supernatural Man, the Second Adam, triumphs over "all His enemies," and "over Saul," the natural man.

LIFE (*Chay*)=18.

SIN (*Chet*)=18. The Psalm represents the struggle between the living God Incarnate and the sin which holds mankind in slavery.

ENMITY (*Eybah*)=18. The enmity (Gen. iii. 15) is crushed by the power of the Redeemer.

PS. NINETEEN: Divine order enforcing obedience. Ten of moral perfection, and nine of Divine Judgement.

The heavens, by their order, "declare the glory of God" in Christ. The law of God shines forth supreme.

EVE (*living*)=19. She was created to be in obedience. She was to be the Mother of the Obedient One, in whom Divine life should be restored to fallen man. The Humanity would be obedient to the Personal Will of the Incarnate Son, acting in obedience to the Father (John v. 19, 30). So the Church the Body to Christ the Head.

JOB=19. He is the persecuted one.

THE ADVERSARY=19. The letters are the same, only differently vocalized. Persecuted and persecuting.

The suffering of the Redeemer's struggle is the exhaustion of the enemy's power to do Him harm. The same number, therefore, fitly belongs to both. Jesus "learnt obedience by the things which He suffered," but when Satan had exhausted his power to wound Him, Jesus could say triumphantly, "It is finished." Jesus served God truly "for nought" (Job i. 9), *i.e.* for no outward reward, but with the perfect obedience of love.

PS. TWENTY: An emphatic form of Two: prayer and expectation.

This is the prayerful song of welcome to Messiah as the King going forth to battle.

PS. TWENTY-ONE= 7×3 , the Divine power of grace.

The twenty-first day of the month closed the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Bread free from mortal taints has the leaven of Divine elevation which the woman hid.

On the twenty-first day of the seventh month Haggai urges Zerubbabel to vigorous action (Hag. ii. 4).

Seven tells of the grave and of the grace wherewith Christ triumphed therein. Three tells of the life which that grace gives. Seven proclaims the Spirit's power.

We have here the celebration of Messiah's victory. By conquering Satan in the grave, He has obtained the fulfilment of His prayer, even "life for ever and ever."

HAGGAI (*festive*)=21. We have already seen that this number is especially associated with Haggai's prophecy.

POSSESSION (*Ahuzzah*)=21 (Ps. 2. 8). This Psalm tells of Christ's victory taking possession of the heathen world.

PS. TWENTY-TWO: An intense form of Two; and so of Sonship. The name Jehovah occurs twenty-two times in Ps. 118.

The word "death" occurs twenty-two times in the Psalter.

This Psalm is, above all others, the Psalm of Christ triumphing through death over the great enemy, the Son of God vindicating His Sonship by His self-oblation for His Father's glory.

JEHU (*Jah is He*)=22. The great captain who accomplished God's will upon the house of Ahab. "Zeal for the Lord!" Yet none but JAH can fulfil that name.

WHEAT (*Chittah*)=22. Messiah is that corn of wheat which should die and bring forth much fruit. "The poor shall eat and be satisfied." The seed yet to be born shall look to Him for life. The poor shall eat the Bread of Heaven.

PS. TWENTY-THREE: Expectancy and resurrection. Messiah delivers the prisoners of hope out of "the valley of the shadow of death."

WEeping (*Baca*)=23. The valley of weeping is changed into streams of refreshment and strength (Ps. 84. 6, 7).

SIN (*Chattahah*)=23. The Good Shepherd leads His flock out of the valley of sin, from death to eternal life.

DOEG, *vide* Pss. 8. 14. The murderer. The faithful are delivered from his violence.

PS. TWENTY-FOUR: Sonship, universality, organization. 6×4 : Christ universal King over the world. 8×3 : The renewal of man's glory by Divine life.

Twenty-four Thrones and Jesus in the midst (Rev. iv.). Halleluyah occurs twenty-four times in the Psalter.

DAVID=24 when written full. The spelling (14) expresses his feeble estate. The fuller spelling shows his glory.

MY BELOVED (*Dodi*)=24 (Isa. v. 1). The vineyard of the Lord of hosts. David is the representative of the nation before God; Christ and His people are one personality (Gal. iii. 28). The unity of God's love is their life.

I SHALL LIVE (*Echye*)=24. The life of a kingdom where death cannot enter (Ps. 119. 144).

PS. TWENTY-FIVE: Righteousness complete (5×5).

This Psalm is the intercession of the Righteous One for His people. Christ pleads His own Personal Righteousness on behalf of the sinful manhood with which He is associated.

JOAH (*Jehovah, my Brother*)=25.

Our Judge (Ps. 9.) is our Brother. His faithful record is the law of our judgement.

A BUZITE=25. He is the Son of Barachel, the Blessed God (Job. xxxii. 6), but "despised" amongst men (Isa. liii.).

PS. TWENTY-SIX: 2×13 should signify the healing of rebellion by the Son of God.

JEHOVAH=26. Aaron washed his hands in the brazen laver. Our High Priest washes them "in His own Innocency." In His innocency we must be washed (1 Cor. vi. 11).

PS. TWENTY-SEVEN: The Cube of Three fully symbolizes the perfect fruition of Divine life.

His enemies have sought to devour Him, but their malice only makes His glorious Life the more manifest. The House of God is His home. He abides in the land of the living.

A RIDDLE (*Chidah*). The great riddle of the universe is the Divine gift of living Food from the very jaws of death (Jud. xiv. 12). The mystery of grace, respecting which the Queen of Sheba looks for teaching from the true Solomon, speaks in this bright Psalm of Divine life (2 Chron. ix. 1).

PS. TWENTY-EIGHT: Still it is renewal and sonship. $7 \times 4 = 28$, Christ accomplishes universal redemption. We are baptized into His *death* and gain new life.

This closes the series of Messiah's struggle (Pss. 20.-28.).

He pleads that His death may not be like the death of the ungodly, a final catastrophe, but a triumphant acceptance at God's Hands. He cries out for vengeance on the Powers of Darkness, and for the establishment of the Eternal Kingdom of the resurrection.

GEHAZI (*the valley of vision*)=28. The prophet's servant fitly represents those who live in the midst of external privileges while yet their heart is set upon earthly things. The valley of vision is not so good as the valley of weeping. The prophet's servant must have a doom proportionate to the hypocrisy with which he cherished mischief in his heart.

STRENGTH (*Ko'ch*)=28. "The Lord is my strength" (verses 8, 9).

PS. TWENTY-NINE: Sonship and authoritative judgement.

The seven thunders of judgement wherewith the Son, as the Word of God, utters the Divine Voice. This sevenfold peal fittingly closes the decad of Messiah's struggle (Pss. 20.-29.). The ten Psalms form a complete Poem of the Incarnate Conqueror. A tenfold utterance of the Name Jehovah, judging according to moral truth, a sevenfold Voice, the Holy Ghost speaking by the Son of God, to whom all judgement is committed.

The judgement in Noah's time points onward to the judgement by the Incarnate Word.

PS. THIRTY: Divine Life (15×2). The Son of God in His glorious power.

The last decad naturally spoke of the Incarnation. This decad goes on to the Divine manifestation.

Ps. 30. praises God for drawing Him out of the pit. The glorified Body of the Risen Saviour is "the House of David," raised up in this third decad, dedicated to God in Eucharistic Sacrifice. The elasticity of the risen Life

takes the place of the heaviness wherewith the Son of God was burdened in His humiliation for our sin.

THE BUZITE=30. He who is glorified is He who was despised (*vide* 25). In Him Humanity is healed.

JUDAH=30. He is "the praised One."

AHITUB (*Father of Goodness*)=30.

AHIJAH (*Brother of Jehovah*)=30.

Glorious names for Him who, by His resurrection, has unloosed us, setting us free for the heavenly worship.

PS. THIRTY-ONE: The number of Deity ($9+15+7=31$). These are the special numbers for the Three Divine Persons.

EL (*Godhead*)=31.

The mysterious interaction of Godhead in its intrinsic relationships is brought forward by the cry wherewith Jesus leaves His Human Body dead upon the Cross. "Into Thy Hands I commend My Spirit." Christ had triumphed over Satan enduring with Divine power in human weakness. Now His Human Soul will act triumphantly in Sheol as the instrument of the Father's omnipotence. By death He destroys death. He is the Divine Representative of the covenant speaking in the glory of Divine life.

AHAZIAH (*The Lord takes hold*)=31.

The wicked kings of the house of Ahab are omitted from our Lord's genealogy, not because God did not take hold of them, but because they did not take hold of God. The Divine grasp must be mutual in the unity of Divine life.

AHIHUD (*Brother of Union*)=31.

DODAVAH (*Love of Jehovah*)=31. He was the father of Eliezer, who warned Jehoshaphat not to join with Ahaziah (2 Chron. xx. 37).

I WILL PRAISE THEE=31 (Ps. 30. 20).

I WILL PRAISE THE LORD=31 (Ps. 118. 19).

PS. THIRTY-TWO: Sonship in Divine glory. $32=8 \times 4$, universal renewal in the Kingdom of Christ.

BEL=32. Probably another form of the word Baal. Bel and Nebo were heavy burdens carried by their worshippers. God, on the contrary, carries His people (Isa. xlv. 1). When did He feel their burden? When He took our nature with the burden of sin. This is the Psalm of the sin-burdened Redeemer. The burden of the lifeless stone is changed for the love of the Husband, not Baal now,

but Ishi (Hos. ii. 16). We are to follow Him, as love guides us by His eye (verse 10).

TOBIAH (*the Goodness of the Lord*)=32. God calls even the Ammonites to submission and penitence, no longer to be as horse and mule, which have no understanding. Loving invitation! Yet "great plagues remain" for those who will not accept it. Eliashib had prepared for Tobiah a chamber (Neh. xiii. 4). Nehemiah, a type of Divine comfort, turned him out. God's goodness, outraged by our sin, necessitates the rejection of the wilful sinner. The ministry of the Comforter would but aggravate our sin, unless we yield ourselves in submission to the operation of His changeless goodness.

GLORY (*Kabod*)=32. The manifestation of God's love to man.

HEART (*Leb*)=32. The human organ of love to God.

PS. THIRTY-THREE: The glory of the Resurrection: the Divine life of the new Creation. This Psalm transcends the limits of Judaism.

JEDIDAH (*One Beloved*)=33. Divine life renewed through the Mother of Josiah. This Psalm expresses the holy joy which Josiah's reformation must have brought to faithful souls. God "fashioneth all their hearts."

JEHIAH (*Jehovah liveth*)=33. He who has life in Himself is our life. Jehiah was a doorkeeper of the ark. This Psalm commemorates the life on earth of Him, the Creator, who is the Eternal Word, the Door through whom we enter into eternal life, for it was 33 years.

A MEADOW (*Abel*)=33. The wise woman dwelt at Abel (2 Sam. xx. 18).

PS. THIRTY-FOUR: The Divine life of the Crucified. The covenant people (2×17) are called to share both the life and the suffering. The Angel of the Lord, only mentioned in Pss. 34., 35., protects them. This is the distinguishing idea of the Psalm, sonship, safety, in God's covenant.

BABEL (*the Gate of God*)=34. The world's Gate of God is to the child of God a mere Tower of Confusion. The Angel of the Lord is our true Guardian. The people of Babel may seek to make themselves a name, but "the Face of the Lord is against them to root out their memory from the earth."

GOEL (*the Avenger*)=34. He is our true kinsman. He avenges God, and saves the people of God.

HEART (*Lebab*)=34.

WAVES (*Doki*)=34. Crushing power (Ps. 93. 3).

If we look to God's angel our heart will not fail because of the waves of earthly commotion. "Let not your heart be troubled. I have overcome the world"

PS. THIRTY-FIVE: The Divine Righteousness of grace (7×5). Divine grace will avenge the faithful, and destroy the enemy in the pit whereby he sought to ensnare God's people.

GEBAL (a district of Edom)=35.

JEHUDI (a Jew)=35.

The Jews by rejecting Christ become as Edom. The Angel of Vengeance persecutes them.

This reference to the Jew gains emphasis as occurring in a comminatory Psalm. Ps. 69. has for its number "The Da that Cometh." Ps. 109. refers us to Ahimelech, the High Priest slain by Doeg, as the true High Priest was crucified by reason of the clamour of the Jews.

So do these titles force the application of the three great Psalms to the unbelieving people of God.

PS. THIRTY-SIX: 6×6 speaks of worldly power in its completeness: 9×4 speaks of all the kingdoms of the world becoming subject to Divine glory.

The very purpose of the Psalm is to contrast the worldly and the Divine conceptions of power. Some persons imagine that the first and second half of the Psalm do not belong to one another. Not so. They are intended by contrast to add to the emphasis of each part. The double factors imply what the Psalm suggests.

WHERE ART THOU? (*Ayecah*)=36. It is the first word spoken by God to fallen man when man would hide himself. How this illustrates the feebleness of man in his wilfulness!

HA-EL (*the Godhead*)=36. He alone "doth wondrous things" (Ps. 77. 15).

LEAH (*Weary*)=36. A type of the Jewish nation represented afterwards by Judah, her son. Rachel represents the Christian covenant, the first-loved wife of Jacob. The "weary" covenant of a worldly law gives place to Rachel, the predestined object of Divine Love. An earthly claim hastened the first marriage. A heavenly purpose consecrated the second covenant with Divine power.

AHITUB (*Brother of Goodness*). One high priest bearing the name belonged to the house of Ithamar, which was set

aside for contempt of God's law. The other was the father of Zadok, "the righteous one." The name seems to be associated with translation from earthly to Divine.

A TENT (*Ohel*)=36. Specially the covering of goat's hair over the curtained dwelling-place of the Divine Presence. This symbolized the Jewish nation, whose sin was not done away. It was to be done away, and the darkness of the worldly sanctuary would be succeeded by the glorious "building eternal in the heavens."

PS. THIRTY-SEVEN: Divine life in the grave wherein we are buried with Christ.

Ps. 37. is specially the martyr's Psalm. The martyr is safe whatever the power may be wherewith the enemy can assail him. "Fret not thyself."

ABEL (*Vapour*)=37. The first martyr is an example speaking to all mankind, that none may be moved by the outward prosperity of the ungodly.

JEHOAHAZ (*Whom Jehovah upholds*)=37. The two names express the natural weakness and the Divine strength of the martyr. The one glorifies the other. This king reigned for seventeen years. That is the number of God's covenant people. In his distress he turned to the Lord, and the Lord sent him a deliverer.

AHAZIAH=37, really the same name (*vide* 31).

PS. THIRTY-EIGHT: A Psalm of the Sin-Bearer. It should express the Divine life of the new man. If divided into factors it gives 2×19 , which in like manner expresses the obedience of the Son of God.

Ps. 6. is weighed down with the physical misery which sin has brought upon mankind. This the Redeemer has to bear. Ps. 38 treats of the same subject, but rather with reference to the anguish which Divine displeasure occasions. His Personal obedience, His unchanging "desire to be true to God, which God knows," waken expressions of confidence in God's support, and at the same time intensify the physical suffering by the anguish of penitence, because the sin which He deplores has been an outrage against the Divine Love from which His Personal obedience never wavers.

INCREASE. RAIN (*Bul*)=38.

PS. THIRTY-NINE: Divine life in judgement. God's image in its nothingness. Hence the nothingness of created things as

seen by God. The Psalmist deplors his nothingness, a stranger with God upon earth passing away so as to be nought. He is created in God's image, and therefore he feels the nothingness of created life. $39 = 3 \times 13$. 3 of God's image: 13 of rebellion and fall.

ELDAD (*God is a Friend*)=39. Weakness pleading with God.
COZBI (*deceptive*)=39. The deceptive world bringing God's image to destruction.

ONE LORD=39. The unity of God in whose image man was created. Our only hope, our final refuge, our eternal life.

DEW (*Tul*)=39. The weakness of man in all his multitude. Contrast with this the multitude reborn in Christ, the dew of the morning, but not perishing, for they have not only God's image, but His communicated nature.

PS. FORTY: Probation of obedient love.

The self-oblation of the accepted Redeemer who has been found worthy of God. Mosaic sacrifices were not worthy, for they perished in death, but the sacrifice of Christ rises to live in the love of God. He will rise from the dead, and declare God's righteousness to the great congregation.

GOEL (*the Avenger*)=40. This is the great Psalm of Redemption. Our Kinsman, our Redeemer. *Vide* Ps. 34. for a feebler form.

THE HAND OF THE LORD=40. A title of the Redeemer.

LINE (*Chebel*)=40. The measure of human life.

FAT (*Cheleb*)=40. The fat is the acceptable part of the sacrifice.

PS. FORTY-ONE. The number "One" seems to emphasize the idea, and not to introduce anything fresh. Probation of faith, amidst seeming nothingness. The weak one is Messiah. He in His weakness, given up to death, is yet an object of Divine care. Blessed are they who are so united with the Divine mind that they recognize the object of Divine prophecy in the suffering form which they behold.

Ps. 109. is complementary to Ps. 41., *i.e.* $109 + 41 = 150$. There we have the curse on unbelief, as here we have the blessing vouchsafed to faith.

ELI (*My God*)=41. The weak Sufferer is none other than God Himself.

Vide this same truth brought out in Ps. 82., which is 2×41 .

The word recalls the cry upon the Cross.

RAM (*Ayil*)=41. The Acceptable Sacrifice.

STRENGTH (*Eyal*)=41 (Ps. 88. 5). Messiah having no strength, His human nothingness evinces His Divine security. We must realize created nothingness if we would have God accept the offering of faith.

BOUNDARY (*Gevul*)=41. The limitation belonging to created life. Faith is strong, not heeding its own nothingness, however great may be the power of the world.

MOTHER (*Im*)=41. The human nature of Christ, derived from His mother, subjecting Him to human weakness (*vide* Ps. 51.)

PS. FORTY-TWO: The Probation of the Divine Sonship; or again (6×7), the child of grace abiding in the conditions of the world. Probation, and expectation.

The Son of God endures the thirst for God which belongs to the condition of an exile.

Our Lord refers to this when He says, "I thirst."

Pss. 42., 43., form a triplet.

ELOAH (*Deity*)=42. That for which the soul thirsts.

BILHAH (*feebleness*)=42. Bilhah seems to represent this Gentile world, bringing forth devout souls during the Jewish period. Dan was her child. Shall not the uncircumcision, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the law and circumcision dost transgress the law? (Rom. ii. 27). So also Naphtali represents the devout souls, whose prayers and alms went up before God.

JOCHEBED (*whose glory is Jehovah*)=42.

TABEAL (*God is good*)=42. Father of the man proposed as King in Jerusalem (Isa. vii. 6).

HELED (*transient life*)=42.

JABAL (*a stream*)=42. The dwellers in tents during this transient life represent mankind far from God.

HE SHALL CLEANSE (*Jezakkeh*)=42. Christ sharing our weakness cleanses us from our sin.

PS. FORTY-THREE: Probation and Divine welcome at hand.

The Divine welcome vouchsafed to the thirsting soul, which longs to leave the world for the House of God. The Eucharistic presentation in Ps. 43. consummates the time of expectancy in Ps. 42.

ICHABOD (*Where is the Glory?*)=43. The glory of the old priesthood is departed. The new Priesthood leads forth in the power of light and truth. Though the earthly glory be gone, the power of Divine Love remains.

- JEDIDIAH (*the Beloved of Jehovah*)=43. The name given apparently by Divine Oracle to Solomon.
- PS. FORTY-FOUR: This number seems specially to indicate the Redeemed, dead to the world, crucified with Christ. Probation in the death-struggle.
- ABIEL (*the father of strength*)=44.
- ELIAB (*God is father*)=44.
- Names of encouragement in times of sorrow.
- BLOOD (*Dam*). "Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb Cf. "Resisted unto blood" (Heb. xii. 4).
- CHILD (*Yeled*). That Child is the leader. "Unto us a Child is born," the Son of God, the Child of earth.
- THE LORD LIVETH (*Chay Adonai*)=44. No overthrow can destroy Him.
- OF DAVID=44. The heading of so many Psalms with which we approach the heavenly altar.
- PS. FORTY-FIVE: The Sacrifice approved is Righteousness, the embodiment of Divine perfection (9×5), the Lord our Righteousness.
- A Psalm of lovely things. Ps. 15. spoke of the going up to Heaven. Ps. 45. ($= 3 \times 15$) speaks of God the Son coming forth from Heaven in Divine beauty to assume our humanity in holy wedlock. Christ our strength in our probation.
- THE GOEL=45 (*vide* Ps. 40.).
- ADAM=45. The first to endure probation. Alas! He fell.
- LOT=45. Proved by lifelong vexation (2 Pet. ii. 9).
- The Second Adam comes as the predestined Goel to redeem mankind, as Abraham redeemed righteous Lot.
- EXCEEDINGLY (*M'od*)=45. Fellowship with the Redeemer in temptation, is a transport of supreme joy (Jam. i. 2).
- PS. FORTY-SIX: Probation in the midst of the world (2×23). It is a Psalm of Exodus. Judgements come upon the sinful world, but the people of God have their faithfulness proved and rewarded. The power of the gates of hell must be manifested in order to show the greatness of the Divine deliverance. The Church comes forth from earth as the Patriarchs from the Valley of the Shadow of Death in Ps. 23. "God is in the midst of her."
- LEVI (*adhesion*)=46. "Leah said, Now will my husband be joined to me." The Jewish covenant rises to close union with Messiah in the experience of His struggle.
- ELIJAH=46. Preparing the way for the final Kingdom of God.

- CUBIT (*Ammah*)=46. The light in the ark seems to have been a solid cubit shining with the glory of the Shekinah: a type of Christ's presence with His Church.
- PS. FORTY-SEVEN: The probation of grace.
- Ps. 45., the coming of Messiah. Ps. 46., the Divine security of the Church. Ps. 47., the missionary appeal to the heathen world, inviting them to the kingdom of grace.
- JOEL=47. This prophet proclaims the terrible Day of the Lord. All must turn to Jehovah from all nations in the "obedience of faith."
- TRUSTING IN THE LORD=47. This is the security of each individual (Ps. 112. 7).
- HIGH PLACE (*Bamah*)=47. The true High Place is the Bosom of God.
- HULDAH=47. The prophetess who foretold the trouble coming upon Jerusalem, but assured Josiah that he should go to his grave in peace because he trusted in the Lord.
- PS. FORTY-EIGHT: The Life proved and renewed in glory. As a multiple of twelve it is a number of civic organization. The universal Church is the well-built Body of Christ ($6 \times 8 = 48$). The old world is taken into a new and living covenant.
- The deliverance in this Psalm is beyond any historical event, although some great deliverance may have been the occasion of its composition. It is the heavenly City which is here set before us. We must cross the draw-bridge of death. So God will be our guide to enter into it.
- STRENGTH (*Chail*)=48. This city is the true home of strength.
- HAM=48. The ships of Tarshish sailed round the country of Ham. This appears to be the special home of Satan's power. The Son of God is called forth as the Redeemer of the enslaved. Egypt trembles. The palaces of No are not to be compared with the palace on the north side of Zion, the Temple of Jehovah.
- JABAL (*alarm-trumpet*)=48. Angel hosts blowing their trumpets round Mount Zion are the terror of the world.
- PS. FORTY-NINE: The square of seven signifies the complete power of death. Nothing but the resurrection of the Redeemer can effect deliverance. Death is the doorway for the saints to claim their home (Ps. 48. 13). Death is

the tyrant gnawing upon the enslaved multitude of mankind; no one can resist it. Probation passes through judgement into jubilee. God will bring us to the jubilee of life (Ps. 50).

AHOLIAH (*his father's tent*)=49. The inspired artificer of the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle was a structure of death. The inspiration was a promise of life. Life in its weakness is the earnest of a Divine Home to God's children.

HIEL (*God liveth*)=49 (1 Kings xvi. 34). All worldly power, as Jericho, is only of death. Hiel's sons died in building it up. The Son of God died and rose again to build the City of Life, the New Jerusalem, not on earth but in Heaven.

MOAB=49. Worldly perpetuity is not glory but shame.

THE LIVING GOD=49. Jesus is declared to be the living God because He could not be holden of death.

MEASURE (*Middah*)=49: The Redeemer measures the Church with the rod of the Cross (Ezek. xl. 3).

Sin, bondage, death are conquered. Thus we go on to the Psalm of Jubilee.

PS. FIFTY: The fulness of righteousness, life, and freedom. The Theophany of the Covenant God.

Ps. 50. may be called the Jubilee of Proclamation.

Ps. 100. the Jubilee of Extension.

Ps. 150. the Jubilee of Consummation.

The Jubilee Psalm tells us who have a right to keep Jubilee and who can claim God's covenant. Sacrifices are not substitutes for personal purity. We must be holy if we would offer acceptable sacrifice.

It is remarkable that this Psalm begins with the number which expresses the completeness of the world as separate from God. "Godhead God the Lord hath spoken and summoned"=666. God speaks to the world not as being in covenant with Him, which would be three eights, but as having the need to enter into covenant with Him. The call is not to the regenerate, but to make the world feel its need of regeneration. This jubilee is no invitation of mercy, but a proclamation of judgement.

JEZEBEL (*Virgin*)=50. A nominal worship of Divine power, such as was given to Baal, suffices not. Jezebel must be slain, for she has not a virgin heart.

MY REDEEMER (*my Goel*)=50. The heart needs to be redeemed from the world's tyranny.

SEA=50. The Red Sea is the symbol of escape from the world. The sea generally symbolizes purification.

GROUND (*Adamah*). Man must return to the ground whence he was taken unless he be redeemed by baptismal grace.

UNCLEAN (*Tameh*)=unclean, expresses the condition of man as needing redemption.

PS. FIFTY-ONE: Three Seventeens imply the Divine life of God's covenanted people.

The walls of Jerusalem are to be built up in the midst of earthly sinfulness by the "sacrifices of righteousness."

The Son of God takes the likeness of sinful flesh, because God "requires truth in the inward parts and wisdom," that man may recognize His glory.

MY MOTHER (*Immi*)=51. The likeness of sinful flesh was that which the Eternal Wisdom assumed, being made man of the substance of the Blessed Virgin.

EDOM=51. Esau is the representative of the natural man as Israel is of the regenerate. "Who is this that cometh from Edom" is not merely a question as to the local Edom, but it is a question as to the Son of Man springing up from the fallen race which Esau symbolized.

NO=51. This great city symbolizes the power of Egypt from which the people of God are redeemed.

ON=51 (Probably *the Sun*). Another place of worship among the Egyptians.

PS. FIFTY-TWO=13×4. Universal apostasy. The times of Antichrist. The number only occurs thrice in Holy Scripture. Azariah reigned fifty-two years. He was smitten of God for his profanity in offering incense (2 Kings xv. 2).

In spite of the boasts of the enemies, the Wall of Jerusalem was finished in fifty-two days (Neh. vi. 13).

The Psalm is concerning the pride of unbelief. It is a defiance of Antichrist. The speaker is He that slew the great Goliath whose sword is treasured up at Nob (*vide infra*). Doeg represents those who said, "This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours."

"Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted

in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his 'greed.'

Dr Mahan notices that this verse=2197, *i.e.* 13³

This remarkable phrase represents the culmination of wickedness. The number gains especial significance, for it is the number of redemption. The Redeemer is the equivalent of the antagonist. "Jesus of Nazareth" (in Greek)=13³.

SON=52. The Son of God is the Avenger who was to overthrow the tyrant. He abides in the House of God for ever.

ELIHU (*God is He*)=52. A type of Christ vindicating Job against the accusation of the ungodly. Eliphaz belonged to Edom as Doeg did.

NOB=52. David might well have called this the Psalm of Nob, for that was the city of the priests where Ahimelech dwelt whom Doeg slew.

MAGOG=52. This Psalm carries us on from the massacre in the days of Doeg, to the final Antichrist when the armies of the aliens shall seek to destroy the saints.

CALEB=52. He had to suffer from the false reports of the spies, but God rooted them from the land of the living, for they died in the wilderness, but the faithful one in his eighty-fifth year could well appropriate to himself the thankful utterance with which this Psalm closes.

PS. FIFTY-THREE: A duplicate of Ps. 14. It is a sort of continuation of Ps. 52., as Ps. 14. is of Ps. 13.

ELIHU=53 (a fuller spelling of the name).

This Divine Person comes down amongst the children of men, to see who was found faithful in the great apostasy.

MEGIDDO=53. The scene of Israel's battles, present to the mind of St John when he would describe the final conflict of the Church with the powers of evil at Armageddon.

AHOLIBAH (*my tent is in her*)=53. In Ezekiel this name signifies the Jewish people to whom God gave a covenant, that He would dwell in them, but they rejected God and followed Egypt and Assyria. Nevertheless, they remained God's people. Afterwards, when they said, "We have no king but Caesar," they broke away from the covenant of God. The two forms of Psalms, Jehovistic and Elohist, seem to imply the double apostasy and double judgement.

HEAT (*Chemah*)=53. The wrath of God on the unbelieving.

A STONE (*Eben*)=53. God would be our salvation, our "stone

of help." Those who are without understanding make Him to be a stone of stumbling.

PS. FIFTY-FOUR: 9×6 implies the combination of Divine judgement and worldly power. In the Cross is the hiding of the power of God, a Good Friday Psalm. God makes His Son, though rejected by the Jews, to triumph by His Cross over all the world.

NOD=54. The judgement upon Cain may well be associated with the Psalm of the treacherous brethren. They who persecuted their brother in his wandering shall be driven forth as "wanderers" themselves (Hos. ix. 17).

TRIBE (*Matteh*)=54.

BELOVED OF THE LORD (*Jedid Jehovah*)=54.

The Divine Wanderer had not where to lay His head, but God was His helper (verse 4). He dwelt in the Bosom of God.

PS. FIFTY-FIVE: An intensified expression for Righteousness.

The Chaldee refers this Psalm to the rebellion of Absalom.

We have Abithophel, Judas, the final Antichrist, before us.

Nevertheless, the cause of righteousness shall not fail.

The opposition of the last days will probably be centred round one who, like Judas, shall hold a position of trust towards Christ.

EDOMITE=55. The natural representative of Antichrist.

DUMAH=55. The same idea. Silence of the dead.

SOUTH COUNTRY (*Neged*)=55.

SOCKET (*Eden*)=55. [A different word from the Garden of Eden (Cant. v. 15).]

PS. FIFTY-SIX: The Righteous One confronted with worldly power, which is signified by the hostility of the people of God. 7×8 tells of the grave and of renewed life coming forth from it. The "far off regions" listen for the voice of the Dove, the voice that speaks with redemptive power from the Cross. "Through the Lord shall I praise the Word" (verse 10). The Divine nature makes the Word to triumph through death. He Himself is delivered from death, and calls His people, buried with Him in baptism, to glorify Him as the Word Incarnate by the new life which He has given to them.

NADAB (*noble, generous*)=56. He was the son of Aaron, and perished because he offered strange fire. We cannot "praise the Word" save with the fire which came down from Heaven, the living power of God the Lord.

ABIGAIL (*father's joy*)=56.

The beautiful wife of Nabal "the fool," whom David took to himself after her husband's death, represents human nature, which the Son of God assumes as His Bride, "that being dead wherein we were held." The five damsels who accompanied Abigail when she rode upon the ass (1 Sam. xxv. 42.) are a type of the Jewish law, leading God's people to Christ.

PS. FIFTY-SEVEN: Righteousness enduring the grave. Seven tells of the death unto sin; 19×3 tells of obedience unto righteousness. The sinful flesh destroys, but the Holy Ghost quickens.

Observe the heading, "Destroy Not." Written when David fled from Saul in the cave of Adullam. He would not destroy the Lord's anointed.

EL JEHOVAH=57. (Ps. 118. 27). It is the Psalm of Divine life. The three Psalms, "Destroy Not," point to the three days of our Lord in the grave. God would "save Him from the reproof of Him that would swallow Him up" (verse 3). He looks forward to the resurrection (verses 9-12).

ALTAR=57. Christ offers Himself a sacrifice acceptable before God. The Divine altar is a Home of safety.

NOTHINGNESS (*Aven*)=57.

SUBSTANCE (*Idem.*)=57.

PS. FIFTY-EIGHT: Righteousness, a renewing power.

NOAH=58.

The flood destroyed the world of the ungodly, and regenerated the earth. Men were "like a deaf adder," and would not listen to Noah when he called them to find safety.

THY BELOVED ONES (*Yedidehu*)=58 (Ps. 60. 6). They are kept safe with Christ, dying to the world.

Noah in the ark is a type of Jesus in His burial.

HEN=58. The son of Zephaniah, which means "The Lord's hidden one." He is the child of grace, whence his name.

GRACE (*Hen*)=58. "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Noah in Hebrew is only the word "grace" spelt backward. The Psalm of Noah is a Psalm of grace and regeneration. "God saved Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter ii. 5). The two ideas are expressed by the two digits. The vengeance of God is a righteous judgement, accomplishing the "reward for the righteous" as well as the destruction of the ungodly.

EAR (*Ozen*)=58. It must not be "like the deaf adder." "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." Jesus speaks and warns. We must hear.

THE GLORY OF THE LORD=58. The closing verse attaches this idea to God's judgement. So was it shown at the flood.

THE GARDEN=58. It was the first manifestation of grace when God made all lovely things to grow therein.

MEDAD (*the beloved*)=58. God's love spoke by him as it did by Noah, warning the disobedient in the camp (Num. ii. 16).

PS. FIFTY-NINE speaks of judgement. Saul sent to Michal's house to have David slain. This was a type of the Jews, from whom Jesus escaped by His death and descent into hell. The ungodly nation was to be punished by scattering, but not destroyed. Ps. 58. speaks of judgement on the whole world. Ps. 59. of judgement upon the Jews.

HAVILAH (*pang, terror*)=59. The travail pains of a woman. So the Jewish nation was to have pangs in giving birth to the Christian Church. The land of Havilah is spoken of as the territory of gold, which is Divine charity manifested in the New Jerusalem, bdellium, like manna, and the onyx-stone, the symbol of Christ's intercession for His people.

WALL (*Chomah*)=59. God would be a wall to His people even in their depression. The waters of the Red Sea (Ex. xiv. 24) were as a wall through which they passed into new life out of Egypt. So was He their "high tower of defence." God is a wall to His people. This Psalm entitled "Destroy not," is an assurance when outwardly they seem to be given to destruction.

PS. SIXTY: The attainment of worldly power. The judgements of Pss. 58., 59. are followed by the victory of Messiah over the world power. Five Twelves set forth the righteousness of the Kingdom in its organized completeness, for JAH has set up a token of His power. The Cross is His banner. The four Fifteens celebrate the banner of the Crucified.

EXCELLENCY (*Gaon*)=60.

VESSEL (*K'li*)=60 (of the sanctuary). Also the jewels given to Rebekah. Also Esau's hunting weapons and the instruments of a shepherd. The Cross is the instrument of the Good Shepherd triumphant in grace.

PS. SIXTY-ONE: Eternal sovereignty over the world.

- Messiah, though claiming the world, does not found His Kingdom upon the world, but upon the Rock which is higher than man.
- THE DAY=61. A Psalm of Christ's triumph. "We are the children of the day," an unending day. "His years are throughout all generations."
- MASTER=61. We must own Him as our Master if we would share His Kingdom.
- THE WOMB=61. God has watched over the Psalmist all the day, from His mother's womb. Filial confidence.
- THE PROUD (*Zedim*)=61. The day of the Lord manifests the proud in their impotence. All earthly pride is vain.
- PS. SIXTY-TWO: The soul waiting for the power of God. (62=2×31). This expectation depends upon God's promise. It is not the self-confidence of a worldly heart. The world is "like a tottering wall," but "power belongeth unto God."
- ASA (*Healer*)=62. This Psalm might well have been sung by him and his army after their victory over the Ethiopians.
- MY SON=62. The promised Son of David is the God on whom David waited. He called to Absalom, My Son, My Son. Such a natural reliance was vain. The promised Son is He whom the Eternal would call by that name. I have set My King, My Son, upon David's throne.
- MY REDEEMER LIVETH (*Goali Chai*)=62. It is this ever-living Son to whom David would look for redemption.
- PS. SIXTY-THREE: The new world of Divine life. (9×7=63). The Divine power asserted in the grave by the Spirit of Life.
- PS. 63. is the Psalm of the Resurrection Morn. In weariness although in faith, the Psalmist waited for this life to assert itself. He now rejoices therein.
- HANNAH (*grace*)=63. This Psalm is a *Magnificat* of the prayerful soul which has been vexed by many adversaries.
- THE GLORY OF GODHEAD=63 (Ps. 19. 2). That glory is the light of the true day. Outward nature proclaims it.
- PROPHET (*Nabi*)=63. The Prophet speaks in that light.
- I SHALL SEE GOD (*Echezeh Eloah*)=63 (Job xix. 26). The blessed light of the Resurrection.
- PS. SIXTY-FOUR: Power in the world complete and extended. (64=4³). It represents the Cross in a solid, cubical form, the city whose length breadth and height are equal. 8² represents the Communion of Saints new born in Christ.

- Ps. 64. speaks of the security of God's work. In the Cross is the hiding of God's power. "On themselves fall their tongues," for they said, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." God will vindicate His people.
- NOAH (*rest*) in its fuller form of spelling=64. Eight, as the basis of regenerate life, stands out prominently in the number of him in whom the whole world was regenerated. God "preserved his life from fear of the enemy." Noah was "true of heart and was glad."
- JUDGEMENT (*Din*)=64. This points us again to the Flood. God's arrows fail not.
- PS. SIXTY-FIVE: The righteousness of the new world. Five Thirteens tell of rebellion being changed into righteousness. The earth is reaped.
- Sixty-five years elapsed between the Fall of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews by Hadrian.
- Ps. 65. is the harvest song of righteousness.
- ADONAI=65. "All flesh must come to Him that answereth prayer." He is the Lord of the harvest.
- TEMPLE (*Haykol*)=65. The harvest is co-extensive with the temple of God's covenant. Judgement must begin at the House of God.
- MOURNING FOR AN ONLY SON (*Ebel Jachid*), Am. viii. 10. This expresses the desolation of Jerusalem. "By terrible things Thou wilt answer us in righteousness."
- PS. SIXTY-SIX: The intensity of worldliness, which God subdues. At the time of the great flood Antichrist will seem to have prevailed, but God can subdue. So it was amidst the insolence of Egypt's power. "He turned their Red Sea into dry land." "He is terrible in His doings toward the children of men."
- Two Thirty-threes intimate the manifestation of the Incarnate God dwelling for thirty-three years of hidden life upon the earth.
- The first Thirty-three begins the closing Novena of Book I.
- The second (Ps. 66.) begins the closing Heptad of Book II.
- The third (Ps. 99.) is the *Ter Sanctus*.
- THE LORD IS ON MY SIDE (*Jehovah li*)=66.
- GILGAL (*rolling away*)=66. The Psalm expressly refers to the passage of the Red Sea and the Jordan. Now must the reproach of an oppressive world be rolled away, and Messiah shall claim the Kingdom.

- PS. SIXTY-SEVEN: The grave of Christ, the central power, subduing the world. From its darkness "the light of God's countenance" shines forth with renewed vitality, evangelizing the world.
- PS. SIXTY-EIGHT: Worldly power and regeneration. Four Seventeens tell of the covenant people throughout the world, the Church Catholic in her progress.
- PS. 68. is the processional Psalm of Israel looking back to the march through the wilderness.
- LIFE (*Chayim*)=68. It is the Psalm of Pentecostal life wherein Christ being ascended leads His people onward in union with Himself.
- THE GLORIOUS GODHEAD (*El Hakkabod*)=68 (Ps. 29. 3).
- WISE (*Chakam*)=68.
- The Wisdom of God is the guide of His people.
- ALL LIVING (*Kol-Chay*)=68. The name under which the promised Seed is announced to Eve, on being turned out of Paradise (Gen. iv). The triumphal march is the manifestation of promised Life. Christ living in His Church.
- PS. SIXTY-NINE: The judgement of the created universe.
- PS. 69. sets before us the King looking forward to judge those who would not have Him to reign over them.
- DINAH (*judgement*)=69. The brothers took upon themselves to avenge the wrong that had been done instead of giving place for the wrath of God to punish the guilty (Luke xix. 27).
- THE DAY THAT COMETH (*Hayom Habba*)=69. The words of the Psalmist are not the utterance of human vengeance, but the announcement of that great day (Mal. iv. 1; iii. 19).
- NEEDY (*Ebion*)=69. The Judge who ascended up to receive the Kingdom in Ps. 68. is the Poor and Needy One, the Son of Man, but acting in the power of the Holy Ghost.
- PS. SEVENTY: Life completed and rest attained. After the seventy years God would descend to set His people free.
- This Psalm (repeated from Ps. 40.) prepares for the close of Book II., as Ps. 70. for the close of Book I. Pss. 41. and 71. are intermediate Psalms of pause, to be united in the grand utterance of Psalm 72., which closes the first half of the Psalter with the announcement of Messiah's Kingdom.
- ADONIJAH (*my Lord is Jehovah*), the second of David's rebel sons, who had to be subdued before Solomon could receive the kingdom.

- WINE=70. The true wine, the good wine, is that which flows from the grave, from the wounded side of Jesus, living in death with the power of the Holy Ghost.
- There is a remarkable difference between the two Psalms.
- PS. 40. 18, "O God, make no long tarrying"=686=2×7³, which represents the Son of God struggling with the power of the grave in its fiercest exercise.
- PS. 70. 7, "O Lord, make no long tarrying"=666. This represents the conquest of the kingdoms of the world which, in Ps. 72., are seen as the kingdoms of God and of His Christ. The beast shall reign no more.
- PS. SEVENTY-ONE: Ps. 71. indicates God as a Rock of Habitation. The Rock which was Christ's grave was a symbol of the Divine Rock wherein His heavenly life abode, His Divine Sonship and the foundation of His Church. Not only will He rise victorious, but the Psalmist looks to be partaker of the Resurrection. "Thou shalt turn and bring me from the depth of earth again."
- JONAH=71. The great type of our Lord's death and Resurrection, and of the Divine Sonship as set forth in the Christian monogram,—ΙΧΘΥΣ, "J. C., Son of God, the Saviour." Into that grave we are baptized, and so the number Seven represents both the grave and the Spirit who raises us thereby from this world of sin.
- DOVE (*jonah*)=71. The sevenfold Spirit of power.
- PS. SEVENTY-TWO: The Son begotten from the grave in the unity of the Eternal Spirit. This is Solomon's Psalm, the King's Son. 6×12 sets forth the Church co-extensive with the new earth. 9×8 represents the Humanity perfected in Divine renewal.
- HESED (*mercy*)=72. One of twelve officers who provided victuals for Solomon and his household, living at Aruboth (*windows*). The windows of Heaven are opened that God's mercy may be showered down upon us.
- MERCY=72. This half of the Psalter closes with mercy.
- THE LORD MY GOD=72. God Himself is mercy.
- BOCHIM (*tears*)=72. God's mercy must waken in us the tears (Judges ii. 6). We cannot enter into the Kingdom of His Mercy without true penitence by reason of our sinful alliance with this evil world.
- PS. SEVENTY-THREE: The songs of the Kingdom of God begin to fill the grave where the risen Saviour lies hid. Three

speaks of Divine life. Ps. 73. opens Book III. Ps. 72. told of Messiah's Kingdom as the manifestation of God's mercy. Ps. 73. tells of the experience of His hidden goodness to them that are of a pure heart so as to see His Truth.

WISDOM=73. It is the Incarnate Wisdom, proclaimed in Isa. li., He, by whom the walls of Jerusalem are to be built up. This solves the riddle of the present prosperity of the ungodly.

THE LORD BE MAGNIFIED (Ps. 40. 19)=73. This Psalm is a *Magnificat*.

HACHILAH (*darksome*)=73. It is the place where David spared Saul's life. He knew that the Lord would smite him. He would not avenge himself.

PS. SEVENTY-FOUR. Ps. 74. is related to Ps. 44., as Ps. 70. to Ps. 40. The Body of Christ is the devastated Temple. Observe the series: Ps. 37., the Martyr; Ps. 74, the Church militant in her desolation; Ps. 111., the Church Eucharistically nourished in the wilderness; Ps. 148., the Church glorified by all creation.

HADASSAH (*myrtle*)=74. Esther is a type of the Church militant in captivity to the world. The world sees the enthroned dignity, but God sees His people as afflicted and exiled. "Deliver not thy turtle dove unto the multitude of the greedy wild beast" (verse 19). The beast is the world. "O Lord, tarry not" (*vide* Ps. 70. *supra*) (Rev. xiii.).

WITNESS=74. The Church perpetuates the witness of Calvary (John xviii. 27), suffering for the Truth.

ETERNITY=74. Christ is the Father of Eternity. The Church bears witness to the Eternal Truth.

PS. SEVENTY-FIVE: The grave of Christ, the home of righteousness ($75 = 3 \times 5^2$). That righteousness is a Divine righteousness, so that they who are buried with Christ have life in that grave ($75 = 5 \times 15$). It is the very righteousness of Christ whereof we partake. Fifteen implies His personality. The Psalm expresses His triumphant power. "Destroy Not" is its title of security, akin to Pss. 57.-59.

MICAH (*Who is like Jehovah?*)=75. Assyria is to be destroyed by the uprising of Babylon, but the Church is secure in the Name of the Lord. Micah predicts the birth of Messiah at Bethlehem. "Unto Thee, O God, do we give thanks."

PRIEST=75. The true Priest shall come with the ministration of a living righteousness. The law could not give life. It therefore shall pass away. The law of the Spirit is eternal. "The earth is weak: I bear up the pillars of it."

NIGHT=75. Earth's night-time must yield to the Divine day. "The horns of the ungodly shall be broken" when in the midnight Christ comes with power. "The horns of the righteous shall be exalted" as a day without end

PS. SEVENTY-SIX: The grave of Christ conquering the world. ($76 = 4 \times 19$). The Church in her obedience witnesses to God's power throughout all the world, and all things serve Him.

THE REDEEMED OF THE LORD (*Ge'uley Jehovah*)=76.

GOLDEN ALTAR (*Mizbach Hazzahab*)=76.

A voice comes forth from the golden altar, calling for judgement (Rev. ix. 14) for Jesus has died.

SERVANT=76. They who serve God shall find Him watching over them. The elect Servant is the Redeemer.

PS. SEVENTY-SEVEN: Seven the number of the grave, eleven of sin. Christ subjecting Himself to death in the likeness of sinful flesh.

In the seventy-seventh generation from Adam Christ was born. He is "the Right Hand of the Most High," doing wonders in His earthly life as man. The waters through which Israel passed were a type of the powers which His redeeming Presence put aside.

GIHON=77. One of the rivers of Paradise. Some have supposed that it was the Nile. The gospel of the Incarnate waters the world.

JOAH=77 (*the Lord is a brother*)=77. Hezekiah's recorder. The Lord is not ashamed to call us brethren.

JONADAB (*The Lord is noble*)=77. We have to be detached from the world as the sons of the true Jonadab, living in tents upon the earth.

STRENGTH=77.

TOWER (*Migdol*)=77.

GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD (*Hodu l'Adonai*)=77. (Ps. 118. 1).

PS. SEVENTY-EIGHT: The digits tell of a renewed covenant of deadness to the world buried with Christ, but the factors tell of worldliness and rebellion ($78 = 6 \times 13$). This long Psalm recounts the constant disobedience of Israel. Ps.

77. spoke of God's redeeming love leading them, but they rebelled against Him, and their rebellion was aggravated by His continual benefits.

BREAD (*Lechem*)=78. Such was the bread which came down from Heaven. God feeds even the rebellious with the Bread of Life. Alas! They refuse this "light Bread!"

QUICKEN ME (*Chayeni*)=78. Such should have been the cry of the covenanted people, but they set God aside.

UZZAH (*strength*)=78. He who was driving the ark trusted to human strength and not to God's covenant.

PS. SEVENTY-NINE: Death as a condition of Divine judgement.

Ps. 74. spoke of devastation arising from the world's hatred.

Ps. 79. speaks of Divine judgement and man's unfaithfulness.

OG (*the king of Bashan*)=79. His bulls are the type of sinful powers on the other side of the Jordan of death.

BOAZ (*therein is strength*)=79. A type of Christ, who does a kinsman's part to deliver the widowed soul from the tyranny of Satan, when bulls of Bashan are compassing her about and she comes back over Jordan to Bethlehem.

One of the pillars of Solomon's Temple. "God will establish it in strength" (1 Kings vii. 21).

DELILAH (*languishing*)=79. As Samson perished under her fascination, so the people that should find strength in God perish in worldly delight, and become a jest to their enemies.

PS. EIGHTY: Renewal.

Ps. 80. sings of the renewal of the Lord's Vine. It was "burnt with fire"=888, but it had within it the imperishable life of the predestined Son of God, "burnt, but not consumed."

AI (*a heap of ruins*)=80. The world is a heap of ruins, but, alas! the people of God too often meet the world in their own strength, and so they become a ruinous heap themselves forfeiting the life of Divine renewal.

FOUNDATION (*Yesod*)=80. The blood was to be poured upon the foundation of the altar (Ex. xxix. 12). He who is the Life of the Vine is Himself the foundation of the living altar. His life-blood streaming from His side is the principle of renewal whereby the Church draws near to God. His Blood is poured out, and His eternal Sonship, the foundation of the Christian altar, keeps it in life.

PS. EIGHTY-ONE: (81=9²), Divine judgement and renewing life.

ELIM (*oak-trees*)=81. Here God made a statute with Israel, ordaining the observance of the Sabbath (verse. 5; Exod. xv. 23).

MICAH (Who is like Jehovah?)=81. As Ahab, so all who neglect God's covenant must perish. Micaiah lives.

GREAT IN HIS GLORY (Ps. 21. 6)=81.

ANGER=81.

THRONE=81. So does God's power of judgement shine out in this Psalm, and prepares for the Psalm which follows.

PS. EIGHTY-TWO: Regeneration by the Son of God.

This is the Psalm which our Lord specially quotes as promising a Messenger from God who should give Divine life to the people, and therefore must Himself be the Son of God.

Psalm 41. pronounced a blessing on those who recognized the crushed One. This Psalm (=2×41) pronounces the doom of those who reject Him.

LABAN=82. No efforts on Laban's part could rob Jacob of the Blessing. Now Israel is acting Laban's part towards the Greater Jacob.

GAZA=82. Symbol of the Philistine, carnal, strength of the Jewish heart.

NABAL (*fool*)=82. A type of the Jewish nation in its churlish blindness rejecting Christ, yet Christ had all along protected them. The faithful are symbolized by Abigail whom David espoused after Nabal's death.

UZZAH (*vide* Ps. 78.)=82. The Jews looked to natural strength whereas they had the Ark of God with them. They outraged it by their carnal expediency.

LUTE (*Nebel*)=82. Its ten strings symbolize moral obedience whereby alone we can attain to the promises of faith.

OBEY (*servant*)=82. He was a remarkable link in the chain by which the Divine Sonship was to be accomplished. Himself the "servant," born of Ruth, the Moabitess, was to be the progenitor of the Son of God. So the servile covenant of Judaism was to lead onwards to the covenant of Divine renewal by the Incarnate Son.

SAINT (*Chasid*)=82. What though David mourned that the Saint was nowhere to be found. He shall come. He shall bring the Divine life which alone should be worthy of that designation. The Saint, the Servant of the Lord, will be rejected by the deceitful, carnal fool.

PS. EIGHTY-THREE: Renewal and Divine life.

This Psalm is a call for God to vindicate His own Majesty by a revelation of Himself as God in the midst of His people. The enemy are not to perish by this appeal, but are to learn the Divine Truth as enshrined in the Incarnation of Christ, glorified throughout all the world.

A TOWER (*Migdol*)=83. Near this place God effected the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and the Red Sea. So shall be the manifestation of God delivering His people at the end of time.

PS. EIGHTY-FOUR: Regeneration and universality. This number belongs to the sequence of Twelves, and therefore implies civic organization, the House of God, the heavenly Jerusalem, Catholic sanctity, individual penitence.

PS. 42. at the head of the Korahitic Elohim-Psalms, and Ps. 84. at the head of Korahitic Jehovistic-Psalms, are allied. The phrase "the living God" is peculiar to these Psalms; found also in Hos. ii. 1.

PS. 42. speaks of the thirst of Jesus upon the Cross, Ps. 84. of the thirst of Christ's people on their pilgrimage.

ENOCH (*dedicated*)=84. The wicked Enoch built for himself a city upon earth. The saintly Enoch walked with God, and God took him to a better city, even an heavenly.

DREAM (*Chalom*)=84. It is a dream of joy, as Ps. 126. speaks, but a dream of truth which abideth for ever to them that trust in God.

PS. EIGHTY-FIVE: Renewal in righteousness. $85 = 5 \times 17$, which signifies the righteousness of the covenanted people.

This Psalm is a declaration of "righteousness and peace kissing each other" by virtue of Christ's Incarnation.

MICAH (or MICAH) (*Who is like Jehovah?*)=85. He has given us one of the most remarkable prophecies concerning the birth of Christ (Micah v. 2).

The mountain of the Lord's House shall be established with Divine power.

THE FOUNDATION (*Hayesod*)=85. The Edomites cried out that Jerusalem must be laid bare even to its foundation, not knowing that that foundation would be Christ Himself.

MOUTH=85.

EPHOD=85. Both of these words have reference to God's revelation. He spake of old time by the Ephod. Now He has spoken to us by the Mouth of His own Son.

PS. EIGHTY-SIX: The regenerate world.

ELOHIM=86. This is a specially Divine Psalm. Kay notices that the Divine Name occurs three times in this Psalm (verses 9, 11, 12), and in verse 15 is a reference to the revealed Name in Exod. xxxiv. 6.

Also the name "Adonay" occurs seven times, and its correlative, "servant," occurs three times.

LEVITE=86. The priestly tribe.

CUP (*cus*)=86. The special symbol of union between Christ and His people. "The Lord is the portion of my cup" (Ps. 18. 6).

PS. EIGHTY-SEVEN: Renewal through the sevenfold Spirit.

This Psalm represents the heavenly Jerusalem established on the Divine glory. All its inhabitants are born anew, so as to partake of the heavenly life.

EVERLASTING FATHER (*Abi Ghad*)=87. The new birth announced to Nicodemus is accomplished, and the new-born look up to the Divine Lamb as their Father.

SERVICE (*Ghabodah*)=87. All that are there serve God continually.

I SHALL NOT BE MOVED (*Lo emmoth*)=87.

PS. EIGHTY-EIGHT: Renewal intensified.

Christ descending into hell, gathers the Patriarchs to Himself, to raise them up to glorious life. The greatness of His struggle with death is the measure of their deliverance from death. Jesus leaps into the darkness and becomes the Light of them that were imprisoned there.

IN GOD=88 (Ps. 3. 3). Thus His work began, and thus it is perfected. "In God" when the serpent bruised His heel! "In God" He bruises the serpent's head.

A SNARE (*Pach*)=88. God will deliver Messiah from the snare of the fowler.

VALLEY (*Nachal*)=88. Into its depth Christ must descend ere He can ascend, so as to be glorified in His saints.

BROOK. This is associated with our Lord's humiliation in Ps. 110.

PS. EIGHTY-NINE: Renewal and judgement.

This Psalm sets forth the renewal of manhood in the Son of David: "He shall call me, Thou art my Father." Also the Divine judgement which awaits God's covenanted people just in proportion to the closeness of their Divine fellowship.

- Ps. 89. follows Ps. 88. as the manifestation of the covenant which the victory over Satanic darkness has made sure.
 HE SHALL DELIVER (*Yamlot*)=89.
 ZABULON (*conjugal union*)=89. Leah's sixth son is a symbol of worldly success, but natural success abides not. Leah, though fruitful, must give way to Rachel, the type of the earthly covenant to the type of the heavenly Bride.
 GOLAN (*exile*)=89. A city of refuge on the other side of Jordan. Now the High Priest has died. The law is dead wherein we were held. The Goel has set us free and called us to the heavenly Jerusalem from the exile of our fallen condition.
 PS. NINETY: Divine power, sovereignty, judgement. Ps. 90. proclaims our life in God. The Pss. 90.-99. specially set forth the Deific power of the Incarnation ($90=2 \times 45$). The Psalm is a moral consideration of the human race, and it appropriately bears the number of Adam. But also it sets forth the Deification of man by the Second Adam, taking us up into the life of the Blessed Trinity. So this is a Psalm of JAH manifest in the flesh ($90=15 \times 2 \times 3$).
 MOLECH (*king*)=90. The first of the Royal Psalms. The name of the Ammonitish idol was a perversion of the title which really should have been given to the Incarnate God.
 LAMECH (*strong*)=90. He foresaw the removal of the curse from the earth by the intercession of Noah, who should bring rest. So this Psalm looks for gladness from God who in His anger afflicted us.
 MANNA=90. "Satisfy us in the morning with Thy mercy!"
 JACHIN (*He shall establish*)=90. "Stablish the work of our hands."
 PS. NINETY-ONE: Divine judgement ($91=7 \times 13$). Victory over rebellion in the power of the Holy Ghost. He "treads the dragon" going down to the grave.
 In Ps. 3. the enemy used the number 888 to blaspheme Messiah. So Satan uses that number by his quotation from this Psalm.
 MESSENGER or ANGEL=91. The Psalm of Angelic Guardianship.
 AMEN=91. The security of the Divine promises.
 JEHOVAH ADONAI=91.
 THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD=91.
 EPHOD=91.

- MY THRONE=91.
 THE LEVITES=91. Cheyne says, "The most vivid of the liturgical Psalms." How these suggestive names develop that character of the Psalm.
 OBADIAH (*the servant of the Lord*)=91. He looked for Divine protection by his carefulness for the Divine glory.
 CONIAH (*stablished of the Lord*)=91. He was a broken vessel, not by reason of God's unfaithfulness, but because he did not walk in God's ways.
 PS. NINETY-TWO: Judgement. This is "a Psalm for the Sabbath." On that day Christ, the Son of God, abides in Sheol so as to exercise judgement on the Powers of Darkness. The souls of the faithful praise Him for their deliverance. "The ungodly shall be destroyed for ever."
 FEAR OF THE LORD (*Pachad*)=92.
 VALLEY OF SALT=92. A type of the overthrow of all Satanic powers.
 UZZIAH (*the strength of Jehovah*)=92. The great manifestation of Divine judgement by his leprosy.
 PS. NINETY-THREE: Divine sovereignty and life in the Resurrection.—($93=3 \times 31$). The Triune life of the Godhead. This Psalm tells of the brilliancy of the Resurrection. Ps. 8., God's Name is brilliant. Ps. 16., God's saints are brilliant. Ps. 93., the waters of the grave become brilliant by reason of the Resurrection.
 INHERITANCE (*Nachalah*)=93.
 SHIELD (*Magen*)=93.
 HOST (*Zeba*)=93.
 So the Psalter tells of the military glory of the Redeemer.
 BRIDAL CANOPY (*Chippah*)=93. The triumphant Bridegroom leads His Church.
 PS. NINETY-FOUR: Judgement, universality.
 Ps. 94. speaks of vengeance. Christ having received a kingdom, returns to judge those who would not submit. The judgement is naturally attached to the glorious resurrection of the saints.
 AVENGE ME=94 (Ps. 119., 154).
 PS. NINETY-FIVE: The righteousness of God's Kingdom. ($95=5 \times 19$). This Psalm, the invitatory Psalm of our daily worship, calls men to the obedience of faith while we rise up to exercise the righteousness of God, wherein we are permitted to sing God's praise. It is our King who calls us.

DANIEL (*the Divine Judge*)=95. Two names of importance.

1. The second son of David, the Beloved (1 Chron. iii. 1), the child of Abigail, the elect Humanity, "the Father's joy," born at Hebron, the city of "alliance" between the Beloved and the House of Judah. He represents the Wisdom vouchsafed to the Church militant as Solomon represents the perfect Wisdom of the soul rejoicing in the Divine Peace, when the Church attains to reign according to the covenanted "oath," the child of the heavenly Bath-sheba.
2. The great prophet. See him praying towards Jerusalem. He would not let His heart be hardened by the urgency of his captive condition.

ISCAH (*one who beholds*)=95. Probably the same as Sarah.

MILCAH (*Queen*)=95.

SELAH=95. A musical notice awakening attention, as the Psalm does itself.

PS. NINETY-SIX: Divine authority over the world. (96=12×8). An organization of Divine life. All the world are to rejoice in the Divine Sovereignty. All authority is given to Christ. The worship to which Ps. 95. invites is offered in His Name. It is a new song. The old Adam was but dumb. His voice no longer rose with heavenly acceptance.

HE SHALL NOT BE MOVED (*Lo Yimmoth*)=96.

WORK (*Malaakah*)=96.

DAILY=96.

EPHAH (*ten omers*)=96.

An omer was the daily measure of the manna which the Israelites ate in the wilderness. An Ephah is the measure of the sin of Israel, as seen by the prophet Zechariah (Zech. viii. 7). An Ephah, therefore, may be taken here as the measure of righteousness, for it is the equivalent of the sin whereby it is transgressed, and the ten omers will represent the true manna whereby the righteousness is given and the sin is taken away.

PS. NINETY-SEVEN: Divine judgement exercised in the power of Holy Ghost by Him that died.

Ps. 97. speaks of the Lord coming in clouds. "Worship Him all ye Gods." Not only the heavenly powers but the powers under the earth. It is the Only-Begotten Son who is "coming again" into the world. So the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews explains it (Heb. i. 6).

THE SON OF ADAM=97. He is the object of the worship.

ZIPH=97. David hid himself among the Ziphites. So the Son of God was hidden, coming in the flesh. He who was hidden comes forth in manifestation with the glory of His Kingdom. The LXX. refers Ps. 97. to David when his kingdom is restored (*καθίσταται*) to him.

AIJALON=97. The heavenly bodies stand still as if arrested to do homage to Joshua's typical victory. They stand still at the voice of a man, the Second Adam.

OBADIAH=97. The Second Adam is the true servant of the Lord (*vide* 91).

LINEN EPHOD=97.

PS. NINETY-EIGHT: Sovereignty in the new creation.

Ps. 98. tells us how the whole universe is renewed by the Great King. "The salvation of our God"=888. "All the ends of the world have seen Jesus." The extension of the Christian covenant is thus proclaimed.

THE MERCY OF THE LORD=98.

ARROW=98.

UZZIAH (*the strength of the Lord*)=98. Stricken with leprosy when he acted in his own strength. Messiah is the true Uzziah, the Word Incarnate, both Priest and King, acting as King in God's strength for us, and leading us in God's strength as Priest to God.

PS. NINETY-NINE: Emphatic assertion of Divine glory.

LIKE THE GARDEN OF THE LORD=99.

PS. ONE HUNDRED: Completeness.

It is noticeable how this number adds the idea of completeness to the Psalms which follow, many of them being almost echoes from the Psalms in the first Fifty.

Ps. 100., a joyful summons to all the earth to praise the Thrice Holy Jehovah.

MICHAEL (*Who is as God?*)=100.

PALM OF THE HAND=100.

EVERY MAN=100.

DAYS=100.

These words express the human race in its solidity, its completeness, its redemption. All are to rejoice in God.

Ps. 101. is the Psalm of the Perfect Man identified in act with the law of the Lord.

JAH ELOHIM=101.

GREAT IS THE GLORY OF THE LORD=101 (Ps. 138. 5).

JECONIAH (*appointed by Jehovah*)=101.

This Psalm expresses the sense of a mission from God.

MALACHI (*My Messenger, or the Messenger of Jehovah*)=101.

He is the seal of the prophets in whom the Old Testament melts into the New. He lives on in the new Prophet of whom he speaks as the coming Elijah. He is, as it were, identified with him in the words of Isaiah, "I will send my messenger (Malachi), and he shall prepare the way before me."

MICHAEL (*Who is as God?*)=101.

MULTITUDE (*Hamon*)=101. The multitude of the nations shall be blest in Abraham, their father. We have here the perfection of the Church of the Redeemed.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND TWO. The perfection of the Divine Sonship.

PS. 102. contrasts the immutable Sonship with the changeableness of created existence. So this Psalm is quoted (Heb. i. 10-12.) The preceding Penitential Psalm ended with a prayer to "build up the walls of Jerusalem." That thought is here continued: "The Lord will build up Zion, and His glory shall appear." This Psalm introduces the Halleluyahs. "The new-born people shall praise JAH."

PRAISE GODHEAD=102. The praise of the Creator prepares for the praise of the Incarnate Redeemer.

FAITHFULNESS (*Emanah*)=102.

DOGS=102 (Ps. 22).

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND THREE: Divine life.

PS. 103. rejoices in the Divine life. The perishableness of the earthly is changed into the immortality of the New Covenant.

The Divine Son of Psalm 102. appears here as the Father of a new race.

ABIMELECH (*My Father is King*)=103.

MY FATHER AND MY MOTHER=103.

OFFERING=103. The Bread of Life.

CAMP (*Machaneh*)=103.

CALF (*Ghegel*)=103 (Lev. ix. 2, 3, 8).

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND FOUR: The whole world (104=8×13). While the Four speaks of Catholicity, the two factors speak of rebellion and regeneration. The sinful world is reborn so that it may praise God.

REST (*Manoah*)=104. Ps. 104. is a Psalm of the renewed creation. God rests in His perfected creation. So the Patriarch Lamech looked for rest when Noah should be born as a Comforter to the curse-ridden world. The Dove found not rest in the world (Gen. viii. 9). Judah found not rest among the heathen (Deut. xxviii. 65). Ruth must find rest with Naomi (Ruth iii. 1).

MANOAH (*rest*)=104. The father of Samson typifies the restfulness by which the Sun of Righteousness is welcomed, the Lord of the New Creation, the new day of God's power wherein the rebellious world is regenerated.

SODOM (*burnt*)=104. The fertility of the earth, a type of the beauty of the New Creation. Woe to them that find rest in this sinful world.

MIDIAN (*strife*)=104.

The day of Midian is the type of the final victory, the rest of God's saints.

NAHUM (*comforter*)=104. The desolation of Nineveh is with comfort for the people of God. It is a new day, the proclamation of peace instead of oppression (Nahum i. 15).

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND FIVE.—105=15×7. The righteousness of Christ as testified by the Holy Ghost in His death.

PS. 105. speaks of righteous deliverance. Joseph, the type of war, raised out of prison to be the deliverer of His people. So Jesus having descended into hell, gives His people the Bread of Heaven while abiding in the Egypt of the world.

GILBOA (*bubbling fountain*)=105. The shield of the mighty was cast away, for Saul abode not in the righteousness of God. The death of the natural man prepares for the glory of the Beloved. God prepares His works with truth.

MASSAH (*temptation*)=105. The people distrusted God's deliverance.

JEHOIADA (*known of God*)=105.

MY SERVANT, JOB=105. The Lord knoweth them that are His. PS. ONE HUNDRED AND SIX: Worldly completeness.

PS. 106. closes Book IV. with praise to God while recounting the sins of the people.

NUN (*Fish*)=106.

Joshua was the son of Nun. Jesus comes to life out the belly of the mystical fish, being proclaimed as God's Son by the Resurrection.

WITHOUT WISDOM (*Lo bechokmah*), Job iv. 21. Such is the

end of those of whom this Psalm speaks, whose hearts are filled with the world.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND SEVEN : The spiritual nature of man continually delivered by God's goodness.

Ps. 107. is a Psalm of praise from all mankind as gathered into the covenant of grace.

THE SONS OF MEN=107. A phrase constantly recurring in this Psalm. It introduces the forty-four Psalms of the redeemed.

GILEAD (*heap of witness*)=107.

Jacob returning from his residence with Laban, a type of Christ at the head of His people. "He suffered not their cattle to decrease" (verse 38). Surely Calvary is the heap of witness where Laban pitched (Gen. xxxi. 25). Christ is returning at the head of both covenants, Patriarchal and Christian, to the House of His Heavenly Father. Earthly relationships are left behind, as the brethren returning to their home.

ONAN (*strong*)=107. The curse of God was upon him because he looked to human strength and not to the Divine will.

THE WRATH OF THE LORD=107. All men are born under the wrath of the Lord. All require redemption.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHT : Renewal.

Ps. 108. an echo of Pss. 57. and 60. The Psalm of Christ's victory follows the Psalm of Man's discipline.—(108=12×9). These factors indicate the organic completeness of the City of God. The Heart of Jesus is the Foundation Stone.

DECREE—108. The decree of God is accomplished, that His Son shall receive Divine homage on the Holy Hill of Zion. This Psalm consummates Ps. 2.

THE MERCIES OF THE LORD=108 (Ps. 107. 43).

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND NINE : Judgement.

Psalm 109. is the solemn Psalm of judgement upon Israel, echoing Ps. 9. with terrible increase of power.

MOTHER OF ALL LIVING=109. Eve represents the race upon which judgement has come, which her Son must redeem. This Psalm tells of the hatred of the seed of the serpent against the woman and her Seed.

AHIMELECH (*the king's brother*)=109. This Psalm may be taken as the cry of the High Priest against Doeg. So the

chosen High Priest of Ps. 110. must denounce the carnal Israelite who stood in Edom's place.

PROVINCE (*Medinah*)=109.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND TEN : Perfection.

Ps. 10. continued the denunciation against Antichrist.

Ps. 110. continues the preceding Psalm with the assurance that all Christ's foes shall be made His footstool.

ELI (*ascent*)=110. The High Priest whose posterity was disinherited is a type of Him who is High Priest for ever.

RIGHT HAND=110. God's Right Hand is expressly mentioned as the sphere of Messiah's Priestly ministration. Having conquered Satan on earth, He ministers as a Priest on behalf of His redeemed in Heaven.

A STANDARD (*Nes*)=110. The standard of the Son of Man is the Cross whereby He has merited His exaltation.

PEOPLE=110. They gather round the High Priest.

HIS GRIEF WAS VERY GREAT=110 (Job ii. 13). Great also the exaltation.

JAEL=110.

The slaughter of Sisera typified the overthrow of Messiah's enemy. "The head over divers countries is smitten."

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVEN : Perfection.

Ps. 111. speaks of the perfection of the God-Man, the High Priest (111=3×37). The perfection of the faithful and true witness who is risen from the dead, the Divine Martyr.

SONS OF THE LIVING GOD=111 (Hos. ii. 2).

PRIESTS OF THE LORD=111 (Isa. lxi. 6). They share the Sonship and the Priesthood of the Incarnate God.

WONDERFUL=111. The Name of Messiah.

VEIL (*Masveh*)=111. The veil of Moses. This indicates the outer form of the sacramental life, having the inward Divine glory which Moses had not. The word occurs only in Ex. xxxiv. 33, 34, 35.

INIQUITY (*Ghalvah*)=111 (Hos. x. 9). The High Priest veiled in our flesh was to bear our iniquity, and cleanse us. BURNT-OFFERING (*Gholah*)=111. The ascending offering which the High Priest presents to the Father.

PESTILENCE (*Keteb*)=111 (Deut. xxxii. 24 ; Ps. 91. 6).

DARKNESS (*Ophel*)=111. The sin from which the High Priest frees us.

I AM THINE=111 (Ps. 119. 94). The High Priest takes us to Himself.

MALCHIAH (*Jehovah is King*)=111. A Priest upon His throne.
PS. ONE HUNDRED AND TWELVE: Civic solidarity.

This Psalm and the preceding belong to Ps. 110., as the inaugural Psalm of the Priesthood of Christ. Thrice we have the words, "Righteousness for ever."

JEHOVAH ELOHIM=112. The Divine righteousness enduring for ever. God's eternity is the basis of our covenanted life.

WINEPRESS=112 (Isa. v. 2). In this the people of God are accepted.

BAALI (*my master*)=112.

EBAL=112. The mountain on which the curses were to be pronounced. God's people shall no longer call Him Baali, but Ishi. The curses are done away in the new covenant of love.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTEEN: Elevation to Divine life.

PS. 113. represents the Redeemer lifting man up from the dust of the earth to the Divine glory.

BEULAH (*married*)=113. "The barren woman" of our fallen humanity becomes the fruitful Bride of Christ.

PELEG=113. His name tells of the division which is set aside by the unification of man in the Body of Christ.

NEHEMIAH=113. (*The Lord comforteth*)=113. This unity is the work of the Comforter.

STATUTE (*Chukkah*)=113.

STREAM (*Peleg*)=113. The refreshing power of grace.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND FOURTEEN: Returning in God's love. (114=5×19). Ps. 114. is a Psalm of Exodus. The world is called to obedience. Eve is to be in pangs with a new birth. In Ps. 14. God looked for a man after His own heart. Now the new-born nation comes forth, to be personified in the Great Redeemer.

The convulsions of nature at the Exodus anticipate this convulsion of the spiritual universe, when the True Man comes forth from His subjection to death in the triumph of Calvary.

The Beloved (14) is the obedient One (19). To Him the whole creation belongs (6).

All perfection (100) belongs to Him.

MULTITUDE (*Chamon*)=114. The multitude of nations out of which the Catholic Church is gathered as Israel of old from Egypt.

DROPPING (*Daleph*)=114. The dropping of tears. The multitude come to God in the individuality of penitents.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN: Naturally expresses the triumph of JAH.—(115=23×5). It is the Exodus through the valley of the shadow of death through which the Good Shepherd leads us in the paths of righteousness.

OUR GOD SHALL COME=115.

AZAZEL (*the Evil Spirit*)=115. The goat was sent to Azazel bearing away the sins of the people (Lev. xvi. 22). This Psalm tells of Christ as triumphing over him.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTEEN: Life beyond the grave.—(116=29×4). The whole world is gathered under the Sovereignty of the Redeemer.

THE LORD IS KING=116.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN: The covenant peoples. The covenant of the Gospel proclaimed to all nations of the world.

THE ANGEL OF THE LORD=117.

OX or LEADER (*Aluph*)=117.

HAMAN THE AGAGITE=117. The hostile head of the world who must be destroyed that the chosen people may reign in his place.

ABDIEL (*the servant of God*)=117.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN: The glory of regeneration.

PS. 118. takes up the praise which was uttered in Ps. 18. The Exodus has its final development in Jesus going forth from Jerusalem to His heavenly throne. (118=59×2).

Ps. 59. spake of David's escape through the window from Saul's emissaries. The former Psalm spoke of danger and death in the state of humiliation. Now death is seen to be no more a danger. The Psalmist calls to have the gates of righteousness opened in the Name of the Lord, while multitudes of enemies are round about Him.

BOSOM (*Cheyg*)=118. It is to the bosom of the Father that He would return.

GIVE ME THY GRACE (*Chonnet*)=118. The fulness of the grace is the measure of the triumph of the regenerate humanity.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND NINETEEN: The glory of perfect obedience (119=17×7). It is the Psalm of the covenant people, dead to the world and alive unto God in the power of the Holy Ghost. This is the seventeenth "Blessed" in the Psalter.

- THE TEACHER (*Hammelammed*)=119 (Ps. 144. 1).
 BENONI (*the son of my sorrow*)=119. But his father called him Benjamin, "the son of my right hand."
 Elsewhere it is shown how the several sections of this Psalm correspond with the proper numbers of their acrostics.
 PS. ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY: Expectation.
 The perfection of the organism which gives form to the Heavenly City as the Body of Christ.
 Jesus leads the pilgrims upwards to the heavenly height.
 In Ps. 119. He is the Way of grace and obedience. In the Gradual Psalms He is the Way of glorification.
 Moses was one hundred and twenty at his death.
 The number of the disciples assembled after the Resurrection was one hundred and twenty. They assemble for the heavenly journey. The upper chamber: the Home on high.
 SEASON (*Moghed*)=120. So does the number mark that first great Festival of the Church, gathering herself up to leave the world.
 SONS OF NOAH=120. They are the Patriarchs of the new world.
 THE FOOL (*Kesil*)=120. Antichrist mimics Christ in everything. The form without the substance.
 PS. ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-ONE: Confident expectation.
 Ps. 121. looks up to the heavenly Jerusalem for the fulfilment of the longings which oppressed the sufferer here on earth.
 ADONEYNU (*our Lord*)=121. The leader of the people.
 NINEVEH=121. The world, the starting-place of the journey.
 The captives in distant Assyria could look up with confidence to the city which had the Divine pledge, though Nineveh must be destroyed. The lofty Niphates had no joy for them, but the lowly hills around Jerusalem enshrined their heart, their hope, their life.
 PS. ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-TWO: Ps. 122. is of the heavenly Jerusalem.
 ABEL-MEHOLOH (*meadow of the dance*)=122: The birth-place of the great prophet Elisha. Here Gideon's Three Hundred chased the Midianites. The terrible struggle of Ps. 22. issues in the glory of the Peace, which is the life of the heavenly Jerusalem.
 PS. ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THREE: Waiting with confidence in God.

- Aaron was one hundred and twenty-three years old when he died in Mount Hor.
 Ps. 23. had special reference to the Patriarchs waiting for Christ to lead them forth from the prison wherein they were bound.
 Ps. 123. speaks of the Church taking up the Cross and following Christ in the dispensation of grace.
 HANANEEL (*the Lord giveth graciously*)=123. Fittingly does one of David's companions call us to wait upon God.
 WAR (*Milchamah*)=123. Our confidence is tested by the war we have to bear. "Though war should arise against me, yet will I put my trust in Him" (Ps. 27. 3).
 PS. ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FOUR: Ps. 124. tells of the glory of David (24). It is a divine glory ($124=4 \times 31$), a victory over all the world (4) by the power of the Cross.
 The escaped bird is the soul carried out of the power of the fowler.
 EDEN=124. He who planted the garden in Eden, where yet the fowler came to slay, has for His people a garden of greater delights, where the fowler cannot come.
 O GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD, FOR HE IS GRACIOUS=124.
 PS. ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE ($125=5^3$): This sets forth the solidarity of righteousness.
 Ps. 125. celebrates the City of Righteousness which cannot be removed.
 PS. ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SIX: A glorious redemption. $126=9 \times 14$. Return to Divine power and love. Twenty-six is the number of Jehovah. The Incarnate Jehovah "has sown in tears, and reaps in joy" the harvest of His redeemed ones.
 INIQUITY (*Ghavon*)=126.
 WIDOW (*Almanah*)=126. In this Psalm of "weeping and reaping" iniquity is done away, and the widow is filled with laughter as the Bride of the true Isaac.
 HORSE=126. The impotence of the horse to save was a contrast to the redeeming power of the God of Israel.
 PS. ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVEN: One hundred and twenty-seven years was the age of Sarah. The type of the heavenly Jerusalem, the Mother of us all.
 OBED EDOM=127. God blessed the House of Obed Edom, His Presence "builds up" whatever is identified with Him.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHT ($128 = 8^2 \times 2$): These factors indicate the abiding glory of the Church regenerated in Christ.

THE HIGH PRIEST = 128.

THE LORD OUR GOD = 128.

ELIPHAZ (*God His strength*) = 128. The speech of Eliphaz is the counterpart of this Psalm (Job v. 17-27).

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-NINE: In Ps. 29. the voice of the Lord was described in its power of judgement over the universe. Ps. 129. depicts the suffering Son of God passing judgement on the unbelievers who maltreated Him. They in their pride are as grass on the housetop.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY: Rebellion and atonement.

PS. 130. is a Psalm for Christmas, the Son of God taking up the likeness of our sinful nature, in order to conquer the rebel and restore mankind.

SINAI = 130. Thus is signified the law of bondage, from which we needed to be redeemed.

HEZEKIAH (*strength of the Lord*) = 130. His prayer was like this Psalm, from the deep of misery.

AFFLICTED = 130. It is the Psalm of Him who bare our sorrows.

THE SPREADING (*of a veil*) (Isa. xxv. 7).

The word occurs but once. It is the spreading of the death veil over all nations. The death poured out over all is done away by the Incarnation of Life.

LIBATION (*nesek*) = 130.

Probably the same word as the preceding. It was an offering of wine, symbolical of the blood of the animal over which it was poured.

In the Psalm of ascent which we have to sing, as called to the heavenly life by Christ, the Eucharistic wine rises from symbolizing the blood of death, to be the form under which the Blood of the ever-living sacrifice is communicated to us. It sets forth Christ's triumph over death.

FOUNTAIN (*Ghayin*) = 130.

The cleansing blood in Jesus is the fountain opened. It is no longer a veil hiding our death, but a glowing stream of life quickening us with the triumphant energy of His mediation. "It speaks better things than the blood of Abel."

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-ONE: The same idea is carried on.

Probably here and in many cases, the "one" is to be taken as emphasizing the idea.

Perhaps the Thirty-one should be taken as indicating the God head of the Redeemer. He has humbled Himself to earth. He speaks as one weaned from His mother, bearing our nature, but detached from human relationships, living under a principle of Divine self-restraint.

ELIMELECH (*my God is King*) = 131.

GIBEON (*hill-city*) = 131.

THIRST (*Tsama*) = 131.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-TWO: $132 = 11 \times 12$. Ps. 132. expresses the purpose of David to build a house for the mighty one of Jacob. Messiah will ascend and build it in three days at the Right Hand of God.

BALAK = 132.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-THREE: $133 = 7 \times 19$. The living Eve (19) is the Church of Christ walking in obedience by the power of the Holy Ghost, built up in the unity of the Spirit. She enters Heaven perfected in Love. The 33 tells of the years of Jesus, our Anointed Head.

GIDEON = 133. Divine Love is "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

THE GREAT KING = 133 (Ps. 7. 3).

MAY GOD BE MAGNIFIED = 133 (Ps. 70. 4). In the years of Christ's obedience, the fulness of God's glory is manifested.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FOUR: $134 = 2 \times 67$. Ps. 67. was an appeal to all the nations of the earth to praise God. Ps. 134. is an appeal to all the angels of Heaven.

Ps. 34. spoke of the Angel of the Lord.

Ps. 134. speaks of the Home of the Covenant, where the angels dwell in the Divine Light, while we are left on earth. Ps. 133., perfect Love. Ps. 134., heavenly Glory.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIVE: The glory of JAH ($135 = 9 \times 15$). JAH exercising Divine authority. The word JEHOVAH occurs in this Psalm fifteen times. The abbreviated and intensified form JAH occurs twice, besides the initial and final Halleluyah. "Our Sovereign Master is above all Gods" = $297 = 9 \times 33$, where we have the Divine glory united with the years of our Lord's earthly ministry.

- Ps. 35. spoke of the Angel of Vengeance. In Ps. 135. the Lord Himself appears avenging His people.
- UNLEAVENED FOOD (*Mazzah*)=135. The Unleavened Bread was a type of the pure Body of Christ. The indwelling Godhead is the true leaven therein.
- HIGHWAY (*Mesilleh*)=135. The Lord made a highway for Israel out of Egypt. Isaiah prophesies of the highway for all nations. Jesus says, I am the Way.
- KINGDOM (*Mamlakah*)=135.
- The Kingdom of Christ is Himself. He is the Food, the Way, the Kingdom.
- PS. ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SIX: $136=8 \times 17$. The regenerate glory of the covenant people.
- Ps. 136. is the great Hallel.
- HEZEKIAH=136. *Vide* 130 (another spelling).
- THE RIGHT HAND OF THE LORD=136. The redemptive power.
- VOICE=136. The Psalm is the voice of praise, echoing the answer to the Word of God.
- PS. ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVEN: Thirty-seven is the martyr's number.
- The people of God had to bear their witness in the afflictions of Babylon, but they shall have the glory of Divine vengeance asserting them against Edom.
- AMOZ (*strength*)=137.
- PS. ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHT: This number is remarkable as being applied by the Cabbalists to Messiah. It was recognized by them as identifying Him with the Comforter, the Branch.
- It is the sixth in the series of Twenty-three. This implies an Exodus, while yet the world is strong to oppose. So the kings of the earth are humbled, and they who walked in trouble find life.
- MENAHEN (*Comforter*)=138.
- This name recalls "the waters of comfort," in Ps. 23.
- BRANCH (*Tsemach*)=138. The Branch of righteousness.
- PORTION (*Cheleg*)=138. The Lord is my portion.
- LEAVEN (*Chametz*)=138. The new leaven of the kingdom of grace, the elevating power of Godhead.
- PS. ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINE: Divine.
- Divine Omnipotence is contrasted with Ps. 39., which sets forth man's feebleness.

- HANANEEL (*Jehovah gives graciously*)=139. A tower in Jerusalem.
- ELHANAN (*idem*)=139. One of David's captains who slew a giant.
- PS. ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY: Ten fourteens imply some grand turning-point.
- Job lived one hundred and forty years after his restoration to prosperity.
- Fourteen is the number of the Beloved. God will show that David is the man for whom He looked (Ps. 14.). The return from the grave is the destruction of the grave.
- ACHAN (*trouble*)=140.
- HEZEKIAH=140. He was called to trust in God and not in worldly alliance with foreign power. "God will maintain the cause of His afflicted."
- MY AFFLICTION (*Ghonyee*)=140 (Ps. 119. 153).
- PS. ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-ONE: The Redemptive Sacrifice. It is the Evening Sacrifice. It refers to the time when David was an exile through Absalom's rebellion. That typifies our Lord's humiliation upon earth, away from the heavenly Jerusalem.
- ASAPH (*collector*)=141.
- The great Levitical singer may well give a name to this Psalm which pleads the sacrifice. It is the great Evening Psalm of the Christian Church.
- HARVEST (*Oseph*)=141. The scattered bones look to spring from the earth with new life (verse 8).
- FLOCK (*Tso'n*)=141. The people of God.
- COMMANDMENT (*Mitzveh*)=141.
- PS. ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-TWO: Psalm 42. referred to the time when David led the multitude to the House of God.
- Ps. 142. contemplates the glorious entry, when the righteous shall compass the Beloved in the heavenly Home.
- THE KING'S SON=142. It is the cry of Messiah to His Father.
- BALAAM (*Ruler of the people*)=142.
- BELIAL (*worthlessness*)=142. These are the enemies of Messiah.
- HIDDAKEL (*the Tigris*)=142. The river on which Nineveh was situated, the river of captivity.
- PS. ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-THREE: The last Penitential Psalm ($143=11 \times 13$). Both of these numbers tell of sin.

It prepares for the great outburst of praise in the Psalm which follows. The Psalmist smitten down to the ground in struggle with the enemy, looks to be quickened by the Divine Righteousness which is inherent within Him. He looks for God in His goodness to slay his enemies, so that he may not go down to the pit as other men, but may have the Face of God resting upon him, in the security of Eternal Light.

Ps. 43. was a Eucharistic introit, looking up for light and truth to lead him to God's dwelling. Ps. 143. looks for the Divine Light to be with him. In descending to the pit, he looks through the pit to ascend to God.

EL ELOHIM JEHOVAH=143. The Jubilee Psalm opened with this accumulation of titles. The death wherein Jesus commends His soul to God is itself a jubilee. In this Psalm, He conquers death by dying.

THE LEBANON=143. It was to furnish the timber of the Temple at Jerusalem. So must the Cross whereon Jesus died become a tree of life for building up the heavenly Jerusalem.

Ps. ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOUR= 12×12 . Thus does the Psalter reach its glory. This number expresses the completeness of the building of the City of God.

"Eight" and "Eighteen" are numbers of regeneration (144= 8×18). Thus is expressed the glory of the city of the new-born people, born out of the grave of Jesus. Thus the 144,000 follow the Lamb upon Mount Zion.

ADULLAM (*hiding-place, or eternity*)=144. This cave was a type of Holy Baptism wherein the faithful take refuge with the true David. David had fled from Gath as a madman. Jesus escapes from Gath, the world, the city of the great Goliath, the winepress of Divine wrath.

THY REST (*Menuchah*)=144 (Ps. 116. 7). Thus does Jesus lead us to the waters of rest if we share His death.

LONG AGO (*Qodem*)=144. It is the accomplishment of God's predestinating love.

LIKE EDEN (*K'Gheden*)=144 (Isa. li. 3). Not earth, but the heavenly Jerusalem, is our resting-place.

Ps. ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIVE: "Forty-five" is the number of Adam. So of the True Man. This is the last of the Alphabetical Psalms. It sets forth the creation, perfectly restored according to God's will.

It is the last of the Davidical Psalms, closing an octave, which are evidently set apart with a purpose to close the Psalter. The lips of the Psalmist are filled with an Alphabet of praise.

TO AZAZEL=145. The removal of iniquity. The scapegoat goes forth in the freedom of new life.

A FORTRESS (*Mitzdah*)=145.

Ps. ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SIX: Ps. 146. speaks of joy in Jehovah's fellowship. Jehovah occurs nine times. The appeal to praise is threefold. The Psalmist stirs up his own soul in the contemplation of Divine glory. There are two Halleluyahs.

"Twenty-six" is the number of Jehovah. The twenty-sixth and final Benediction of the Psalter occurs in this Psalm (verse 4). Earthly happiness is perfected in Divine fellowship. Jehovah is all in all. This Psalm is the first of the final Halleluyatic Pentateuch.

JEHOVAH NISSI (*the Lord my standard*)=146. This name commemorates the great victory over Amalek.

AMAZIAH (*Jehovah strengthens*)=146.

ETERNITY (*Gholam*)=146. "Thy God, O Zion, is King to eternity."

Ps. ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SEVEN: $147 = 3 \times 7^2$. This aptly symbolizes the Lord building Jerusalem, the home of grace. There He sets the meek who are buried with Him in His death. The inhabitants of Zion are called to praise their God. The gift of God's Word and of Divine ordinances binding us to Him, the Incarnate Head of the covenant, is the special glory of God's people (verse 20).

ENGEDI (*the well of the kid*)=147. The healing waters began to swell at Engedi, which represents the beginning of grace in God's earthly manifestation. They reach to En-eglaim, which represents the consummation of heavenly glory in His people on high (Ezek. xlvii. 10).

Ps. ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-EIGHT: $148 = 4 \times 37$. Ps. 48. celebrates the city, perfectly built, the twelvefold city which lieth foursquare. Ps. 148. exults because that city is glorified.

These factors set forth the martyr hosts along with Jesus on Mount Zion in the completeness of their witness. The appeal to praise is twelvefold. They who have died with Jesus live with Him. They appeal to the whole universe.

Jehovah occurs four times. Four is the number of universality.

MAHANAIM (*camp*)=148. The hosts of God who encamp around the just are called to utter their praise. They met Jacob of old upon his journey. They meet us as we advance heavenward.

PESACH (*Passover*)=148. Another word of separation and of reliance upon God. The angel smites Egypt and waits upon Israel. All creation must join to praise God for that great Passover which celebrates the completed triumph of the Only-Begotten Son. Christ is our Passover. Let us keep the Feast.

ARROWS (*Chitzzim*)=148. God uses His angels as arrows (Ps. 7. 14).

PISGAH=148. The faithful rejoice in the glory of the promised home which Moses saw from Pisgah's height, but he could not enter therein.

HOPHNI (*a boxer*)=148. He fought the Lord's battles, but not in the way which was true to the covenant. He looked upon the ark as an earthly charm.

THE MOTHER OF CHILDREN=148. The heavenly Jerusalem (Ps. 113. 9).

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-NINE: Here again we have the 7² which symbolizes the solidity of the City of Grace. They who have died in the Lord are blessed, for they rest from their labours. They are one with the Son of God, who is proclaimed as King upon the Holy Hill of Zion. As He was to bruise the nations with a rod of iron (Ps. 2.), so they are to carry out the fulness of Messiah's triumph in vengeance upon His enemies (verse 9).

The triumph over evil is complete. In the evil world which is cast out there no longer remains anything which can awaken pity. Hatefulness is no longer veiled by any lingering traces of God's creative goodness. It is only seen so as to be hated. The souls of the faithful rejoice in the overthrow of Edom (Ps. 137.), of Babylon (Rev. xix.). The whole universe of evil is separated from the universe of goodness. The souls of the saints abide in the love of God, and carry out His will.

ETERNITY=149. "Take of the tree of life and live for ever" (Gen. iii. 22), a rare form of the word.

A YOUNG MAN=149. So does this Psalm express the vigour of eternal energy in the glorified saints.

PS. ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY: The perfection of JAH. Jesus is glorified in His saints.

ZIN=150. The wanderings of the wilderness are over. The crag of Kadesh, the smitten side of Christ, has poured forth for them its holy stream.

THE INHABITANTS OF THE DESERT (*Tsiyim*)=150. The difficulties and the opposition met with on the way shall be ground of eternal praise.

NEST=150. The swallow has found a nest for herself in the Choir of Heaven. The chambers in the ark were called "nests" (Gen. vi. 14). God looked upon Israel as a nest over which He watched with the overshadowing cloud (Deut. xxxii. 11). Now the brood which He has raised can sing His praise with joy, whereas the Kenite who made his nest in the rock of Petra has been carried away by Asshur, never to return (Num. xxiv. 21).

WING=150. The wings of praise bear up the soul to God.

THE VIRGIN=150. The Psalter is the voice of the Virgin Bride meeting her Lord in the heavenly Jerusalem.

ON MY RIGHT HAND=150. In saying the Psalter we are called to take our place with Jesus, our Head, at the Right Hand of God, sharing in His intercession who is glorified as the High Priest of all creation.

RANSOM=150. The life of Christ as set forth in the Psalter is our ransom. He, our Chieftain, laid down His life in struggle with the enemy, and makes us free from the slavery of Satan under which the first Adam fell.

All these words light up Ps. 150. with a glow well befitting its position as the culmination of Divine praise.

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